

"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che

Fire This Time!

CANADA/ U.S.: END SANCTIONS ON VENEZUELA!



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FEDERATION OF CUBAN WOMEN CELEBRATES 58 YEARS



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NO TMX PIPELINE EXPANSION NOT NOW, NOT EVER!



FEDERAL APPEAL COURT DECISION: A PARTIAL VICTORY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND A PARTIAL DEFEAT FOR THE TRUDEAU LIBERAL GOVERNMENT

By Thomas Davies

In a decision that sent shock waves across Canada, the Federal Court of Appeals just quashed the approval of the Trans Mountain pipeline after a court challenge led by Indigenous Nations. The court decision said the government failed in its constitutional duty to “engage in a considered, meaningful two-way dialogue” with Indigenous Nations affected by the project, and that the National Energy Board’s failure to consider the project’s impact on the marine environment, including the impact of increased tanker traffic on the endangered population of southern resident killer whales.

Stating the Obvious

That the government hadn’t consulted in good faith was no news to those who had supposedly been consulted with. Chief Maureen Thomas of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation said in a statement, “We went into consultations with the federal government with open hearts and minds, but sadly the process could best be described as window dressing. We had a strong sense that the decision had already made before we even sat down.”

Even internal government memos described a negotiation as “paternalistic,” “unrealistic,” and “inadequate.”

That the National Energy Board (NEB), the government agency which regulates

international and inter-provincial aspects of oil and gas industries, refused to consider the impact of the pipeline on marine environment shows how flawed its review process was from the beginning. The whole point of the pipeline project is to get Tar Sands bitumen from Alberta to the oceans of the West Coast to be shipped in tankers. It would increase tanker traffic from 60 to 400 per year.

All the information about the many

Two very different press conferences after the Federal Appeal Court decision. TOP: Indigenous leaders celebrate, BOTTOM: Bill Morneau doubles down on government commitment to build the pipeline



dangers of increased tanker traffic transporting a substance (bitumen) for which there is no proven marine cleanup process in a very sensitive marine

environment were provided to the government in the many comprehensive reports created by the Tsleil-Waututh Nation.

So the shock wasn’t that the approval process was seriously flawed, but that a court had finally acknowledged it.

People Power

The court decision is another victory for the ongoing Indigenous-led movement opposing the pipeline expansion. Over the last decade at every major moment, the movement has been able to pull together enough to make its voice a major factor. Mobilizations of tens of thousands of people, bank divestment campaigns, protest camps, pickets at Trudeau fundraisers, construction blockades and literally thousands of community actions across Canada have made it politically challenging to move forward with the project. So much so that Texas oil giant Kinder Morgan gave up on the project and demanded a government buyout, and a Federal Court released a decision knowing that all eyes were on them.

So That's It?

It's important to reemphasize the Federal Court decision did not cancel the pipeline expansion project; it just told the government the two areas it needed to improve for the approval process to



The ruling found that the NEB process failed to consider the project's impact on the marine environment, including the impact of increased tanker traffic on the endangered population of southern resident killer whales.



move forward. This delays the project but does not cancel it. The Federal Court decision even concludes in Point 772 that it envisions a “brief and efficient” delay to accomplish “meaningful consultation” with Indigenous Nations.

Prime Minister Trudeau also doubled down on building the project, tweeting “Today I spoke with [Alberta] Premier Rachel Notley - and reassured her that the federal government stands by the TMX expansion project and will ensure it moves forward in the right way.”

Federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau was equally determined. He told reporters the day of the court decision, “Our next step is to close on the acquisition of the project. We expect that will happen as early as tomorrow.”

By “acquisition” he is referring to the government bailout of the pipeline project Kinder Morgan demanded and got when progress on the project was slowed due to the persistent opposition. Unsurprisingly, Kinder Morgan Canada shareholders voted within an hour of the court decision to move forward with the 4.5 billion sales of the existing Trans Mountain pipeline and the stalled expansion project to the government of Canada. They made a 637% profit from their initial purchase!

Morneau also continued, “This is a project that’s in Canada’s national

interest...This one will be a strong, commercial project once we de-risk it. That’s what we’re attempting to do so that we can be in the market in the long term.”

So no, the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project is definitely not dead and will be continued stronger. There is too much at stake for the government to let it go now, and they’ve shown time and time again that the evidence doesn’t matter. They have already had countless opportunities to cancel the project on solid grounds with even less political consequences than there would be now.

The Federal government can either appeal the Federal Court decision, or attempt any number of manoeuvres to create the

illusion of indigenous support. They’ve already discussed trying to create some sort of Indigenous-led investment group to take over the project. Also remember that the ruling talks about “meaningful *consultation*” not the “free, prior and informed *consent*” outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and demanded by the many Indigenous Nations opposing the project.

Among the many flaws in the NEB decision making process which the court ruling does not address is its refusal to take into the account the massive climate impact of building and using another dirty Tar Sands pipeline. How could this be a complete or credible decision without that?

You Can't Win a Hockey Game By Only Playing Two Periods

“This battle will continue until we can finally stand back and say B.C. is off limits for toxic resource projects that do not respect the land of British Columbia and the human rights of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples of British Columbia,” Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs

Nothing can change the scientific, economic, Indigenous and community consensus against this dirty Tar Sands pipeline. We’ve come too far now to let

down our guard and let the government re-mount some sort of comeback justifying this project’s construction. This future is this project is truly decisive. We demand a future based on consent from Indigenous Nations. Based on prioritizing people and the planet before pipelines and corporate profits. Trudeau is trying to enable the opposite.

We have shown how powerful we can be when we work together. We need to continue educating, organizing and mobilizing against the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion until the project is totally, completely, 100% dismantled. Now is the best time to make sure the Trudeau government gives up this climate disaster once and for all!

No Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion!

Not Now, Not Ever!

Build Our Future, Not a Pipeline!

Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavies59



ABOVE: Scenes from August 7 "Build Our Future, Not a Pipeline!" IntersAction at Broadway and Commercial in Vancouver.



Top to Bottom: New silkscreens at August 2 Art Build; Rupert Common performing at August 26 Stop KM Legal Defense Fund fundraiser; August 23 protest at Liberal Party fundraiser; Marching at August 7 "Build Our Future, Not a Pipeline!" IntersAction; Protesters outside Liberal Party cabinet meeting in Nanaimo, B.C.

CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION RAMPS UP UNDER SMOKEY SKIES AND LOOMING COURT DECISION

By Thomas Davies

The Climate Convergence coalition started the month of August with the launching of a "Build Our Future - Not a Pipeline!" campaign. They hosted an August 2 Art Build with silkscreens and banner painting for an upcoming IntersAction on August 7. The subsequent "Build Our Future - Not a Pipeline!" action saw an over 200 hundred people take over the busiest transit station and intersection in the Lower Mainland for a loud and dynamic action. Participants were invited to fill in the blank on their own, "Money for _____ Not Pipelines!" signs which were hand silkscreened at the previous week's Art Build. The energy was high, and drumming and chanting also brought attention to a busy information table.

Protect the Inlet continued regular actions at the gate of the Kinder Morgan Tank Farm - with many being arrested for blocking the gates despite rising penalties which included jail time for some. This culminated in a week of action that included a protest outside of a Liberal Party cabinet meeting in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island's on August 22, and then a protest outside a Vancouver fundraiser for Finance Minister Bill Morneau on August 23. The fundraiser was cancelled due to the protest, so people marched down to another fancy hotel where an exclusive fundraiser was being held for the largest Liberal Party donors. Hundreds chanted outside while a few dozens marched in and chanted through a cocktail party. There was no disputing that people have made themselves heard.

Climate Convergence closed the month

out with the August 26 "Frontlines Fundraiser #2", which was a community picnic to raise money for the StopKM Legal Defense Fund. Under skies that now threatened rain, 50 people of all ages and backgrounds came to enjoy each others company, great food, and a special acoustic set by local multi-talented musician Rupert Common. The picnic raised \$625 for the Legal Defense Fund, which helps to support the over 200 people arrested at the Kinder Morgan gates so far.

The end of the month brought the surprising news that the Federal Court of Appeals had quashed the approval of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, and stalled the project until the government could deal with issues of "meaningful consultation" with Indigenous Nations and the impact of additional tanker traffic on marine life. While construction has stopped, the government has continued to emphasize that they will continue with the project and followed through with the 4.5 billion dollar buyout of the project from Kinder Morgan Canada.

July and August have been the months with the largest climate justice actions in Vancouver over the last decade. After a long, hot summer of important organizing, the September 8 "Rise for Climate" International Day of Action will give people an important opportunity to tell Trudeau that they will never accept the expansion of another dirty Tar Sands Pipeline.

People & Planet Before Pipelines & Profit!

Follow Thomas on Twitter:@thomasdavies59

*Follow Climate Convergence on Twitter:
@Climate604*

Battle of Ideas Press

Upcoming Book Release

SYSTEM CHANGE
NOT CLIMATE CHANGE

WWW.BATTLEOFIDEASPRESS.COM
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By Thomas Davies

Thomas Davies is a social and environmental justice organizer based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper and a founding member of Climate Convergence Metro-Vancouver.



Canada: Peacekeeper or Warmonger?

By Janine Solanki

On August 1, 2018, Canada commenced operations as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Canada has sent two CH147 Chinook battlefield transport helicopters and four armed CH146 Griffon helicopters, 250 soldiers assigned to the UN force's military helicopter detachment, another 10 Canadian soldiers working at the UN headquarters in Mali, and 20 police officers. The Liberal government has framed this as peacekeeping in numerous statements, including the May 29, 2018 "Statement by the Prime Minister on the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers" where Justin Trudeau stated that Canada has, "committed new military capabilities, including an Air Task Force to the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali". However, Canada's chief of defence staff, Gen. Jonathan Vance came a bit closer to the truth when he said, "think of it as a UN mission, not necessarily a peacekeeping mission," as reported by the CBC in June 2018. The Liberal government has also insisted that Mali is a non-combat mission, but officials have been vague on what rules of engagement Canadian soldiers would abide by. As reported by the Globe and Mail on July 5, 2018, a

government official simply said that, "for self-defence, we will do whatever is required to protect our UN partners and Canadians."

Those who pine for Canada to return to the days of peacekeeping should remember, Canada's so-called peacekeeping has a bloody history. One stark example is the torture and murder of a Somali teenager by Canadian "peacekeepers" in 1993. Abuse was more widespread than this tragic case and included a commander permitting troops to shoot the legs of suspected thieves, and another senior officer authorizing the abuse of prisoners at their camp as a "deterrent to theft" as reported by the New York Times in 1994.

Yesterday, today and tomorrow, no matter what name is given to the mission, Canadian troops abroad are maintaining the imperialist interests of the government of Canada. Last year the government of Canada announced an increase to its annual military budget by nearly three quarters over the next decade, reaching \$32.7 billion by 2026-27, as announced by Canada's defence minister Harjit Sajjan on July 7, 2017. The day before, foreign minister Chrystia Freeland also promoted increasing Canada's military capacity, saying, "Canadian diplomacy and development sometimes require

the backing of hard power." A government does not increase a military budget for no reason. The move is setting the stage for the government of Canada's plan for a greater role in imperialist wars and occupations worldwide.

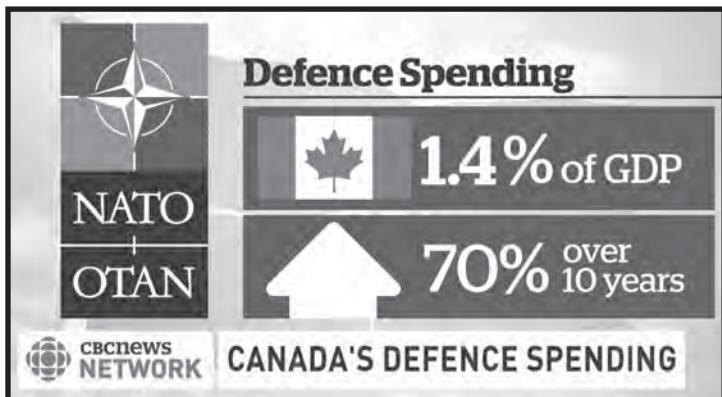


Afghanistan: Canada's debut in the new era of war and occupation

Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York, the U.S. imperialist strategy for a new era of war and occupation was set into motion. Afghanistan was the first target as the U.S. with their allies planned to gain hegemony over the region of the Middle East and North Africa. These brutal actions served to gain control over new markets and resources, as a band-aid solution for a capitalist economy in crisis. From the beginning, Canada had a huge role to play, initially with naval forces, and then with Canadian ground troops and air forces. Canada's troop levels were at times the third highest number of troops deployed, after the U.S. and Britain. NATO's ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) was the main force in charge of the occupation of Afghanistan, and Canada led different regional ISAF operations throughout the occupation. Most notably, from February to August 2004 Canada's Lieutenant-General Rick Hillier was the commander of ISAF. This is the same general who in 2005 said that Canada was fighting "detestable murderers and scumbags" in Afghanistan and that the job of the Canadian forces is "to be able to kill people."

Although in July 2011 Canada claimed to have ceased combat operations, they continued to have a role in the occupation of Afghanistan with 950 Canadian Forces trainers and 45 police as part of a NATO training mission. It wasn't until March 2014 that the government of Canada announced the end of their military mission in Afghanistan.

When Canada entered Afghanistan, it was with sweet-sounding promises of promoting democracy and women's rights. Today, what is the result of over



CBC news asks: "Will Donald Trump come to NATO summit with more criticism for Canada?" June 27, 2018.

12 years of Canada's occupying forces, and the continued NATO presence in Afghanistan?

In conflicts, children are the most vulnerable section of the population and a good indication of the health of a country. According to UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund), Afghanistan remains one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a baby, a child or a mother. A recent World Bank report shows alarming statistics that back up this deplorable statement. Some factors include poverty fueled by an employment rate of only 41% in 2016/17. The education system has also suffered in Afghanistan, with only 43% of children and youth under the age of 24 actively attending school. The fact that many children work

to survive is also keeping children from getting an education, with 29% of children between the ages of 7 and 12 working. Under occupation, Afghanistan's health system has lacked attention and funding to the point that there is little to no access to medical treatment for the people of Afghanistan. It is not only a lack of funding but direct hits from occupation forces that have crippled Afghanistan's healthcare system. On October 3rd, 2015, repeated and continuous U.S. airstrikes on a Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, killed more than 42 innocent people, mainly patients and staff.

However, one doesn't even have to look to Afghanistan to see the extent of this crisis. Just look to the shores of Europe where Afghan refugees make up a significant part of the largest refugee crisis the world has ever seen. This refugee crisis is fueled by the fact that war, occupation and imperialist intervention have made many countries uninhabitable. This is the shameful legacy of the war and ongoing occupation of Afghanistan, and these are the bloody hands of Canadian imperialism.

Canada Military Aggression Beyond Afghanistan

Canada's imperialist project didn't end with Afghanistan. Despite the

government of Canada's claims that they did not participate in the 2003 war in Iraq, this is far from the truth. Paul Cellucci, the former U.S. Ambassador to Canada, provided much insight to Canada's involvement in Iraq when he said, "Ironically, the Canadians indirectly provide more support for us in Iraq than most of those 46 countries that are fully supporting us." This is not a recent statement, but is from March 27, 2003, during the invasion of Iraq. From the beginning and behind the scenes, Canada provided substantial naval and air force resources and personnel, as well as 25 military planners that participated in the initial invasion. In fact, in 2004, Canadian Brigadier General Walter Natynczyk was deputy chief of policy, strategy and planning in Iraq, with 35,000 U.S.,

in Iraq. This will include four Griffon helicopters and at least 250 Canadian soldiers, who will take part in military training, "force protection" for NATO operations, and the running of operation headquarters. All of this is in addition to the 850 military personnel and special forces already part of Canada's military intervention in Iraq. While a "training mission" may seem tame enough, take this into consideration. Canada's "train, advise and assist" mission in Northern Iraq included about 220 Special Forces soldiers, made up of the Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) counter-terrorism unit and Canadian Special Operations Regiment, in addition to other soldiers and military personnel. In 2010 the Globe and Mail described the Joint Task Force 2 as "a shadowy counter-terrorism force about

which little concrete can be said" and "Canada's most elite troops – the faceless soldiers who go to places they won't name, to complete missions they won't talk about." On March 8, 2016, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau authorized Canadian soldiers to



British and Australian troops under his command!

Canada's more recent role in Iraq included the infamous fighter jets which operated in Iraq, as well as in Syria, between October 30, 2014, and February 15, 2016. Although Prime Minister Justin Trudeau tried to paint a more acceptable picture of Canada's military by stopping its airstrikes in Iraq and Syria and declaring Canada's involvement "non-combat," he quietly increased military personnel in Iraq from 650 to about 850. This included increasing the "train, advise and assist" mission in northern Iraq from 69 to as many as 220 special forces.

Just recently on July 11, 2018, during the NATO Summit in Brussels, Belgium, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that Canada would be taking command of a new NATO "training and capacity building" mission

shoot first in Iraq as soon as they detect "hostile intent" from Daesh fighters. At that time, about 20% of Canadian Special Forces training time took place close to or directly at front lines. With authorization to shoot first, how "non-combat" are these training missions? Proving this point even more, in May 2017 a Canadian Special Forces sniper in Iraq broke the world record for the longest confirmed "kill shot" in military history, at 3,540 metres.

Another country on Canada's growing list of military interventions is Libya. Between March 19 and October 31, 2011, NATO imposed a no-fly zone and launched nearly 10,000 sorties against Libya. Canada was a major player in the bombing campaign and deployed six CF-18 fighter jets and also provided three planes for air-to-air refueling and two reconnaissance aircraft. Libya, which before this imperialist intervention had

the highest standard of living in Africa, now is in chaos and lacking any sort of stable government. As documented in a December 1, 2017 report by TIME magazine, Libya has become a haven for the slave trade and human trafficking. The report

says there are estimates of 400,000 to almost one million migrants and refugees captured by the Libyan Coast Guard, with the funding of the European Union, and held in abysmal conditions in detention centers. The bombs that Canada's fighter jets dropped on Libya led to this horrific situation.

Canadian troops aren't limited to Africa and the Middle East but are also taking part in NATO's aggressive actions towards Russia. Canada is leading a battalion in Latvia, one of four battalions also in Estonia, Lithuania and Poland comprised of about 1000 troops each. Alongside leading a battalion, Canada has provided 450 Canadian troops, armoured vehicles, up to six CF-18 fighter jets and naval frigates. This flexing of military might is positioned on Russia's doorstep and is an unwarranted and provocative move against Russia. This is by no means a comprehensive list of where in the world Canada's troops, special forces, navy, air force and military strategists are positioned. Canadian naval operations are taking place in the Asia-Pacific region, Canadian Armed Forces recently carried out military training in Niger, and Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force are currently part of U.S.-led military exercises in the Pacific Ocean. This is all listed on the Canadian Forces web page.

Where is NATO in today's imperialist war drive?

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was originally formed in 1949 as a Cold War alliance of the U.S., Canada and 10 European countries



bolstering their forces against the former Soviet Union. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, rather than NATO dismantling it has instead expanded to 29 members and is more of an active military force today than it ever was during the Cold War. Now NATO is what imperialist countries are using to commit bloody atrocities around the world, under the false auspices of the "international community."

Alongside its full members, NATO also has several "global partners" - Afghanistan, Australia,

Iraq, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan and most recently the first Latin American country, Colombia. With these countries, NATO is spreading its reach around the globe and both increasing their NATO forces and the regions where they have a foothold from which to intervene in.

NATO was first used as a military force in the 1990's when NATO intervened in former Yugoslavia with numerous military missions which served to help break up Yugoslavia. NATO's military missions were culminating in a 78-day bombing campaign in 1999. Yugoslavia was brutally and indiscriminately bombarded by 14,000 bombs, including depleted uranium bombs and cluster munitions which have had long-lasting destructive impacts. This so-called "humanitarian intervention" resulted in over 2,000 civilians killed, thousands more injured, over 200,000 people displaced and forced to leave their homes, and the destruction of infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and homes.

In a June 2000 Amnesty

International report, the human rights organization accused NATO of war crimes when it reported that "NATO forces did commit serious violations of the laws of war leading in a number of cases to the unlawful killing of civilians." As part of NATO, Canada had a role in this deplorable attack on the people of Yugoslavia. The Canadian Air Force deployed 18 CF-18 fighter jets and was responsible for 10% of all bombs dropped on Yugoslavia. Today, NATO still has 4,500 troops operating in Kosovo.

As mentioned above, NATO has been the leading occupation force in Afghanistan since 2001 to today. Currently, there are 16,229 troops from 39 NATO members and partners in Afghanistan, as reported

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WOMEN'S MARCH ON THE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC
SATURDAY + SUNDAY
OCTOBER 20-21, 2018

MARCHONPENTAGON.COM
WOMEN'S MARCH ON THE PENTAGON
WOMENMARCH4PAZ
CONTACT: CINDY SHEEHAN
CINDYSHEEHAN@MARCHONPENTAGON.COM

A poster for the Women's March on the Pentagon. It features a stylized figure holding a banner with a nuclear symbol. The text includes the event name, date, website, and contact information.

Women's March on the Pentagon

Confront the bipartisan war machine
October 20/21, 2018
in Washington D.C.
or at a solidarity action near you.

#WomenMarch4Peace

In response to the continuing march of military aggression by the US and to put an antiwar agenda back on the table of activists, we are calling for a march on the Pentagon on the 51st anniversary of the 1967 antiwar event in Washington D.C.

Our demands are simple:
The complete end to wars abroad
Closure of foreign bases
Slashing of the Pentagon budget
The funding of healthy social programs at home
And end to violence - from beds to bombs

MarchOnPentagon.com

A poster for the Women's March on the Pentagon. It features a large starburst graphic with the text "See you there!". The main title is "Women's March on the Pentagon". Below it, it says "Confront the bipartisan war machine" and lists the date, location, and a call to action. It also includes a section titled "#WomenMarch4Peace" with demands and a website.

YEMEN: An Acid Test for the Antiwar Movement

STOP KILLING THE CHILDREN OF YEMEN

**STRONG AND EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION
NEEDED TO U.S./SAUDI WAR ON YEMEN**

By Azza Rojbi

With summer ending, parents and kids in North America are shopping for school supplies and preparing for the beginning of the new school year. Kids are getting ready to go back to class and see their friends and teachers. Thousands of miles away in Yemen, children and families are struggling to survive under the U.S. backed Saudi-led coalition war on their country.

On August 9, 2018, a bus full of excited children on a school field trip in Yemen's Saada province, was hit by a Saudi airstrike as the bus driver stopped by a busy market for water and snacks. This horrendous attack killed 51 people, including 40 children aged from 6 to 11. Local authorities said that 79 people were wounded, 56 of them children. Pictures of the horrific aftermath of the bombing, and the grieving parents going through the rubble to find the bodies of their children are beyond heartbreak. The world also saw pictures of UNICEF school backpacks covered in blood and shattered around what remained of the school bus. The response by Saudi official came as no surprise as they described the bombing as "a legitimate military action, conducted in conformity with the International Humanitarian Law and its Customary Rules." This further reinforces the complete disregard for human life and decency showed by the U.S. backed Saudi-led coalition over the last three years since the start of its' war on Yemen.

As people in Yemen were still grappling with this tragedy, on August 23, a mere

two weeks after, a Saudi-led coalition airstrike killed 30 people, including 22 children, and four women in the Al Durayhimi district in Hudaydah governorate. The targeted families were preparing to evacuate their homes when the Saudi airstrike hit. "Four people were killed in the strike before, that's why they fled. They wanted to save their lives, their children's lives. Is nowhere safe for us?" one survivor told the news after the airstrike.

22 Million in Need!

There is nowhere safe for Yemeni children and families, the 3 years long war on their country by the U.S. backed Saudi-led coalition has devastated Yemen and resulted in the death of over 14,000 people and the destruction of vital infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, homes, roads, water and sanitary facilities, even archeological and historical sites were targeted by coalition airstrikes.

The United Nations described the situation in Yemen as the "World's Worst Humanitarian Crisis" with over 22 million people

— three-quarters of the population — in desperate need of assistance and 8.4 million living on the brink of famine. Yemen has also been suffering from the largest outbreak of cholera in recent history. Children have been the most vulnerable to cholera and famine, according to the U.K. based charity Save The Children, 130 children are dying every day. That is one child every 10 minute dying from preventable causes in Yemen.

In addition to the daily bombing and airstrikes, the Saudi-led coalition has imposed a land, sea and air blockade on Yemen, causing shortages in food and medicine and other essentials. The U.S. backed coalition has also launched an offensive on the port city of Hudaydah, a vital lifeline for Yemen through which 90 percent of Yemen's food and most of its medicine and fuel is imported.

Whose War?

The Saudi-led coalition started its war on Yemen in March 2015, stating that their goals were to reinstate unpopular former president Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi and to bring back peace and stability to Yemen and the region. Today, over three years of daily bombing and blockade, the Saudi-led coalition has only inflicted death and destruction on the people of Yemen and caused instability, fear and divisions in the region. There is no peace nor stability in sight! They never had the well being of the Yemeni people at heart; their goal is to expand their hegemony in the region and serve the interest of their



Illustration by actor Jim Carrey (jimcarreyonline.com) depicting the August 2018 bombing of a Yemeni school bus full of children, by U.S. backed Saudi airforce

imperialist masters.

The United States government supported this Saudi-led war on Yemen since day one, with aerial refuelling, targeting intelligence and military training. The U.S. has also continued selling weapons and military equipment to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Saudi's main ally in the war.

In August 2018, CNN reported that the bomb used in the atrocious attack on the children school bus by the Saudi-led coalition "was a 500-pound (227 kilograms) laser-guided MK 82 bomb made by Lockheed Martin, one of the top US defense contractors."

The government of Canada has been trying to paint itself as a champion of human rights. The reality is far from it, as was printed in Fire This Time volume 12 issue 5, in an article titled "People of Yemen Resisting U.S./Saudi War & Occupation":

"According to an investigation published recently by the Toronto Star, "Canada has sent \$65 million in humanitarian aid to help Yemenis suffering amid a brutal war. It has also exported \$284 million worth of weapons and military goods to the countries bombing Yemen."

This number doesn't include the \$15 billion sales of Canadian-made armoured combat vehicles to Saudi Arabia approved by the Trudeau government. How can the government of Canada claim to care about helping the Yemeni people in this humanitarian crisis, while providing weapons to the countries responsible for creating this crisis in the first place?"

Don't let the rhetoric by Trudeau and Chrystia Freeland fool you. The imperialist government of Canada has no interest in defending the human rights of the Yemeni people. To the contrary, Canada is an accomplice to the crimes committed by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen. In addition to selling military equipment and arms to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, Canada has offered training support to the Saudi and Emirati military.

Starting in 2011, Royal Saudi Air Force pilots were being trained by the NATO Flying Training in Canada (NFTC) program at military facilities in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, and Cold Lake, Alberta. The program is run by the Canadian Forces and CAE Inc., a Montreal-based flight simulator company. CAE Inc. also



Top: On August 13, 2018 boys protest at the offices of the United Nations in Sanaa denouncing an air strike that killed dozens. Bottom: Yemenis dig graves for children killed in the bus attack by Saudi-led coalition air strike August 10, 2018

has a training facility in Saudi Arabia and two in UAE. These same air force pilots that were trained in Canada are the pilots today executing mission and airstrikes over Yemen. Saudi Arabia and UAE have also been participating in military exercises in Canada with the Royal Canadian Air Force and other NATO members and allies with the latest taking place in June 2018.

Let's Fight for Human Dignity

As peace-loving people and anti-war activists in Canada and the U.S., we have the human obligation to expose the complicity of our respective governments in the crimes committed against the Yemeni people. As we witness daily the horrific killings and destruction imposed on Yemenis by the Saudi-led coalition, silence is no longer an option!

People of Yemen are resisting daily against the aggression on their country and from

around the world. We need to echo their plight and join them in demanding an end to the Saudi-led war and aggression on their country.

Here in Canada, we need to continue holding the Trudeau Liberal government accountable for this bloodshed in Yemen and demand the immediate cancellation of the \$15 billion arms deal to supply Saudi Arabia with heavily weaponized light-armoured vehicles.

Let's join our voices together to demand:
US & Saudi Arabia Stop Bombing Yemen!

Canada Cancel the Arms Deal with Saudi Arabia Now!

Lift the Naval, Aerial and Land Blockade on Yemen!

Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza_R14

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR AND OCCUPATION DEMANDS: NO TO WAR AND OCCUPATION! YES TO SELF-DETERMINATION!

By Janine Solanki

On August 9, 2018, Saudi Arabia and its coalition forces targeted a school bus in Yemen with a United States made a laser-guided bomb. 40 children and 11 adults were murdered, and 79 more were injured. This tragedy is not the only one that Yemen has suffered after over three years of a Saudi-led, U.S.-backed war and bombing campaign against Yemen. Since March 2015 this war has killed over 14,000 people in Yemen. Beyond indiscriminate bombings, Saudi Arabia and its allies have imposed an air, land and sea blockade of Yemen that prevents vital medicines, food supplies and fuel from getting to Yemen. The war and blockade has caused the worst cholera epidemic in history, and now Yemen is facing a famine.

On August 24, Vancouver's antiwar coalition MAWO (Mobilization Against War and Occupation) held a monthly antiwar, anti-occupation rally and petition campaign in downtown Vancouver. With banners and picket signs demanding "U.S./Saudi Arabia Hands Off Yemen" and "Stop Bombing Yemen!" activists brought public attention to the war on Yemen which has been largely ignored in mainstream and capitalist media. An information table was busy as people stopped to talk to organizers, to sign petitions and to get more information. Teams of activists approached passers-by and collected signatures on petitions demanding that Canada end its

\$15 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia. A petition was also available demanding that Canada get out of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), which draws attention to Canada's participation in NATO military interventions, such as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and on Russia's borders in Latvia.

To wrap up the action, protesters raised their picket signs and gathered together to hear Alison Bodine, MAWO's chairperson, speak on the megaphone to the crowd and people passing by. Alison outlined why MAWO has this action every month, to protest the new era of war and occupation that is bringing destruction and bloodshed to our brothers and sisters in oppressed nations around the world. Alison also spoke on how the government of Canada is spending millions of dollars on waging war abroad while waging war at home where homelessness, education and healthcare all lack funding and attention.

As this action came to a close, it was with the commitment to continue educating, organizing and mobilizing against war and occupation, with these monthly antiwar actions and other public events. MAWO also believes in the importance of collaboration and is working to build a strong and united antiwar movement with other organizations around the world. To find out about upcoming events and actions, visit www.mawovancouver.org or follow on Facebook or @mawovan on Twitter.



MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES

*Indigenous struggle
against colonialism*



Arthur Manuel 1951 - 2017

*Indigenous leader, writer and
organizer from the Secwepemc
Nation. Former Chief of Neskonlith
Indian Band and chair of Shuswap
Nation Tribal Council.*

"Canada, as a society, is still in denial about its historical and current colonialism when it comes to Indigenous peoples, and how the country is still largely based on the white supremacism of its founding document, the British North America (BNA) Act. Colonialism is not a "behaviour" that can be superficially changed by a prime minister professing "sunnyways." It is the foundational system in Canada."

Canada was created by an Act of British parliament in 1867. It was more a corporate reorganization, a hurried consolidation of debts, than the birth of a nation. The problem was that they were using the theft of our lands, tucked into what, for them, was this innocuous-sounding Section 91.24 of the BNA Act to cover their debts."

- From "The Reconciliation Manifesto," 2017.

Vilma Espín Guillois, a leader of the Cuban revolution and the eternal president of the Federation of Cuban Women, was an important spokesperson for the Cuban revolution, and especially the struggle of Cuban women for their emancipation within the revolution. As a revolutionary, she carried the respect of the Cuban people when in 1960 she helped found the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). She explained, "When we told Fidel that women wanted to unite, to organize, to participate actively in the revolution – that they did not want only to receive the benefits but to give something back as well. [...] He understood how important this step was and strongly supported it." On August 23, 1960, the FMC held its founding meeting. This year, on August 23, 2018, women across Cuba came together to celebrate 58 years of what has become one of the world's largest feminist organizations – boasting 4 million members – over 90% of women over the age of 14 in Cuba.

Who is Vilma Espín?

Born April 7, 1930, in the eastern province of Oriente to a wealthy landowning family, Vilma began her studies towards a Chemical Engineering degree in 1948, at the University of Oriente. Her revolutionary work began in the urban underground movement alongside Frank País in the city of Santiago de Cuba. They supported Fidel's leadership and the attack on the Moncada army garrison on July 26, 1953.

In October 1953, Fidel Castro gave his famous courtroom speech, "History will absolve me" where he defended his actions against the U.S.-backed Cuban dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. According to Granma Newspaper, Vilma wrote about the first time she read Fidel's words, "I read it in one go... we were all fascinated, it clarified a program around which we could unite to fight." She immediately began clandestinely distributing the text to other revolutionaries. She joined the revolutionary July 26th Movement when it was founded, and when Frank País was tragically assassinated in July 1957, she became its coordinator in Oriente province. Soon after, working in the urban setting became too dangerous, and she joined the guerilla fighters in the Sierra Maestra mountains. On January 1, 1959, the Cuban revolution triumphed, and she returned to Santiago de Cuba to begin the process of establishing the new revolutionary leadership.

She married Raúl Castro, an important leader of the Cuban revolution and Fidel's brother, in 1959. Not only was she a founder and president of the FMC, but she was also a



Vilma Espín, Haydee Santamaría and Celia Sánchez. Three of the original leaders of the Cuban Revolution

**58 YEARS OF THE CUBAN
FEDERATION OF WOMEN**
**"Without women,
the enormous work
of the revolution
would not have
been possible."**
□ Fidel Castro



leader in re-establishing the Communist Party of Cuba, and a deputy to Cuba's National Assembly of People's Power. She passed away June 18, 2007, but has been named the eternal president of the FMC as she served in that important position for 47 years.

What is the role of the Federation of Cuban Women?

Vilma Espín explained the role of the FMC in the early years of the revolution, "We had to change women's mentality—accustomed as they were to play a secondary role in society. Our women had endured years of discrimination. We had to show women their

own possibilities, their ability to do all kinds of work. We had to make women feel the urgent needs of our revolution in the construction of a new life. We had to change both woman's image of themselves and society's image of women." She continued, "We started our work through simple tasks that allowed us to reach out to women, to get them above the narrow, limited framework they lived in. To explain the revolution's purpose to them, and the part they would play in the process."

She further explained that the founding of a women's mass organization carried with it two fundamental goals: 1) Raising political consciousness through education, to engage women in new tasks and 2) Raising political understanding through participation in those new tasks themselves.

Since 1960, the Cuban Women's Federation (FMC) has been developing policies and programs aimed at achieving full equality for women. Some examples of their ongoing work include:

- Organizing "Casas de Orientación a la Mujer y la Familia" (Women and family orientation houses) which assist particularly with conflict resolution and advice stemming from issues such as divorce, intergenerational issues in the family, or domestic violence. This can involve providing legal advice, accessing women's health services and other resources.
- Supporting women's health, especially with information regarding safe sex, abortion, maternity facilities, and teen pregnancy
- Educating members and the public through workshops, forums, a magazine (Mujeres.co.cu), online blogs, laws and policies, and community block parties
- Contributing to the training and well-being of the next generation

The work of the FMC has had excellent results. According to a March 2018 article in Granma International titled, "Cuban women: A revolution within the Revolution," today Cuban women are increasingly involved and more successful across many sectors. The journalists, Danae González Del Toro and Nuria Barbosa León, explain, "Cuban women make up 48% of the state sector workforce, with a similar percent occupying management positions. Excellent employment, participation and leadership opportunities are open to women. [...] Likewise, 78.5% of healthcare professionals are women, as well as almost half of all of those conducting scientific research. Women also constitute 66% of the country's highly trained technicians and professionals, receiving the same salary as their

male counterparts for the same work. Cuban women also have access to free and universal education and healthcare, and represent 60% of all university graduates.”

Since the triumph of the Cuban revolution, many laws have been put in place to protect women and children from violence or being kicked out of the home. However, educating men about women’s issues and challenging gender roles has been one of the major challenges in this traditionally machismo society. However, some strides have been made there too, for example, in 2003 the laws around maternity were changed to grant both men and women maternity/paternity leave during the first year after a baby is born. This law was passed explicitly with the intention of redefining traditional roles and encouraging shared responsibility between partners in raising children.

58 years of the FMC: Continuing the “revolution within the revolution.”

On August 23, 2018, women across Cuba came together to celebrate 58 years of the FMC. Reports from across the country show women coming together in their communities for celebrations with music, dance, speeches, poetry, and pride. From the tip of western Pinar del Rio to the tip of eastern Santiago de Cuba, women of all ages, alongside many men and children, celebrated the gains of women throughout the Cuban revolution.

For example, in Camagüey, according to Radio Cadena Agramonte, 58 women were honoured with their names in the “Book of honour of Camagüey’s Women.” These included state and non-state workers, housewives, and senior citizens. These women were honoured by the community for their commitment to the tasks and ideas of the FMC.

Three important areas in which Cuban women are proudly marching forward in what Fidel called a “revolution within the revolution” are their leadership roles in politics; the struggle against homophobia and transphobia; and

their commitment to Cuba’s revolutionary process.

Women’s leadership in the “revolution within the revolution.”

On March 11, 2018, over 85% of Cubans participated in elections for their newest National Assembly (See *Fire This Time V12I4* for more on the elections).

Women made important gains in the new parliament which is 53.22% women representatives. Youth also made inroads as 13.22% of representatives are under 35 years old, and 40.17% of representatives are under 50 years old. Indeed, the fact that Cuba’s National Assembly is 53.22% women means Cuba now ranks second in the world for the highest participation of women in parliament (Rwanda has the highest percentage of women in parliament in the world). Women also make up 48% of top officials in the State leadership. All this demonstrates the dynamic contribution of women in society. Deputies of the National Assembly are accountable to their municipalities and provinces, responsible for drafting policy, and enacting changes in their communities towards improving Cuba’s socialist system.

After the elections, Cuba has a new President, Miguel Diaz-Canel, as well as a first vice president, Salvador Valdes Mesa, and 5 Vice Presidents, 3 of which are women – Beatriz Jhonson, Ines Maria Chapman, and Gladys Maria Bejerano Portela. Also, important to note that Beatriz Jhonson, Ines Maria Chapman and Salvador Valdes Mesa are



Young Cuban women show their FMC membership cards in Holguin province

all people of colour. While having women and people of colour in leadership does not automatically make Cuba an equal or perfect society, it has made these changes without a quota system. Clearly, it means there are no seats reserved for people of colour or women, but each of these Vice President’s of Cuba are important leaders in the nation who are becoming more and more known for their important work by the Cuban people.

Fighting homophobia and transphobia in the “revolution within the revolution.”

In an interview with CubaSi Magazine, Mariela Castro, Director of Cuba’s National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX) who also happens to be the daughter of Vilma Espín and Raúl Castro, explained the work of the FMC towards not only gender equality but the beginning stages of Cuba’s struggle against homophobia. She explains, “The first steps were taken by the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), with the creation of the National Group of Work on Sexual Education in the year 1972, the forerunner of CENESEX. The FMC also propitiated a public debate on these topics. A landmark moment was the publication of the book “Man and Woman in Intimacy” (Sigfred Schnabel, 1979), in which a scientific voice argued, for the first time in Cuba, why homosexuality is not considered a disease. Many homosexual people have told me the benefits these messages meant to them, against stigmatizing burden society imposes on them.”

The basis for queer oppression and women’s oppression are similarly the traditional family unit and its relationship with the patriarchal-class society and capitalist economic and political order. The fact that many women in the FMC are supporting the work of CENESEX and Mariela Castro, and that same-sex marriage is being proposed for Cuba’s new constitution is a positive step forward towards equality for women and



Tribute to Vilma Espín, Eternal President of the Federation of Cuban Women.

queer people in Cuba.

Women and the commitment to the Cuban revolution

Cuba is currently in the process of debating and discussing a new constitution. The previous constitution was ratified by referendum in 1975. The updated constitution will initiate many changes for Cubans. However, it reaffirms the country's commitment to socialist principals such as those of Jose Marti, Fidel Castro, V.I. Lenin and Karl Marx (For further information see "The path to the proclamation for Cuba's new Constitution" in this issue of *Fire This Time*, page 12). A draft of the new constitution has been approved by Cuba's national assembly and the document is currently being debated and discussed in sessions across the island. Thousands of sessions organized by the FMC to read the new constitution from a feminist perspective and confirm that this new document will advance the tasks and position of women within Cuban society. In speaking to Prensa Latina News agency, the general secretary of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), Teresa Amarelle said, "it is a commitment, it is a duty, it is a debt to our legacy to reaffirm the new Constitution of the Republic." She went on to add, "to contribute with our modest opinions, with our points of view to a project that is very much in tune with the reality of the people of Cuba and that reflects that trajectory in the participation of our women in the revolutionary process."

On December 10, 1966, Fidel Castro, then the Prime Minister of Cuba, spoke to the 5th national plenary of the FMC. He famously stated, "When we arrived here tonight I told a comrade that this phenomenon of women in the revolution was a revolution within a revolution." Fidel continued, "If we were asked that is the most revolutionary thing the revolution is doing, we would answer that the most revolutionary thing the revolution is doing is precisely this, that is to say, the revolution is taking place with the women of our country. If we are asked what the things that have taught us most in the revolution are, we would answer that one of the most interesting lessons which we revolutionaries are getting from the revolution is the lesson the women are giving us." These words were met with great applause by the heroic women of the FMC, then marking six years since the founding of their organization. However, another 52 years later, on the 58th anniversary of the FMC, these words continue to ring true, as women in Cuba continue to learn, organize, educate, and build a stronger more equal and equitable Cuba for the next generation.

Viva Cuba y Viva las Mujeres Cubanas!

Follow Tamara on Twitter:@THans01

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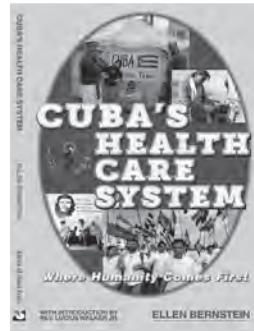
CUBA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHERE HUMANITY COMES FIRST

BY ELLEN BERNSTEIN

"The unfailing dedication of Cuban health care professionals has led to dramatic improvements in quality of life, for millions of people who previously had no other hope of receiving decent medical care. IFCO/Pastors for Peace is pleased to honor the diligent health care professionals of the Cuban health care system. We especially pay tribute to Cuba's national leadership, whose vision of universal health care as a right of every citizen sets an example for the world."

Ellen Bernstein has served as Associate Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) since 2003.

She has been a key staff member of IFCO's project Pastors for Peace, and has been deeply and integrally involved in IFCO's historic work with Cuba.

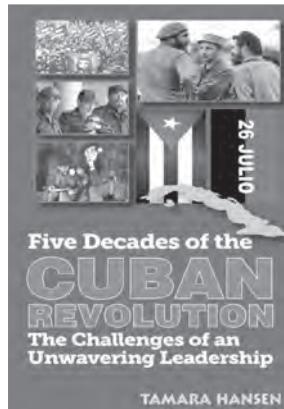


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5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of *The Fire This Time* newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

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OUR HERITAGE



Vilma Espín Guillóis

1930 - 2007

Cuban revolutionary leader and feminist. Founder and Eternal President of the Cuban Federation of Women.

Are not women who suffer most severely the consequences of the economic crisis that hits the dispossessed majorities with fury, also affecting other social classes of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean?

Women suffer all the drama and the impact of inflation, the high cost of living, lack of food, schools, medical services for their children: poverty, hunger, despair; they are the ones who work in inhuman underemployment that offers them miserable pay, who are employed in the maquiladora industries, who receive lower salaries than any place, who are first thrown out on the streets when unemployment is imposed.

Tens of thousands of women are forced to go into prostitution so that their families can survive. Can a more terrible situation be conceived in the twentieth century than that of those unhappy Dominicans suffocated in a container on a ship when they were transferred as vulgar merchandise on their way to become prostitutes on another Caribbean island?

Today, women are part of the current reality, of the economic, political and social problems facing our countries; in the woman of this continent there is the will to act and respond to the call of this epoch."

- *Opening of the fifth Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women, 1990.*

Por Lissy Rodríguez Guerrero

Comenzó la consulta popular y las calles, los centros de trabajo y estudio, las casas, se convierten en ese espacio para debatir, legislar, convertirse en protagonista de los tiempos por venir.

Algunos meses faltan hasta concretar la proclamación de la nueva Constitución, una de las «más modernas» del mundo, como han dicho especialistas del ámbito jurídico, por las necesarias inclusiones al Proyecto, que realizó la Comisión para su elaboración, y aprobó luego la Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular.

No obstante, ya se cuece entre los cubanos lo que será terreno fértil para el ordenamiento económico, político y social del país, el garante fiel de los derechos de sus ciudadanos: la nueva Constitución.

Pero, ¿cuál es el camino a transitar hasta la proclamación de la nueva Constitución? Granma lo acerca a las respuestas...

Realización de las consultas populares, para que los ciudadanos expresen sus criterios y sugieran cambios a los documentos normativos

135 000 reuniones

entre el 13 de agosto y el 15 de noviembre

→ El pueblo cubano se reunirá en sus centros de trabajo, estudio, comunidades (puede participar en más de uno de esos escenarios)

Procesamiento de la información por parte del Centro de Estudios Sociopolíticos y de Opinión

→ El proyecto de Constitución se compone del preámbulo y 224 artículos, divididos en 11 títulos, 24 capítulos y 16 secciones

→ Para el análisis y el procesamiento de las opiniones, cada párrafo ha sido numerado, son 755 en total

→ Dos personas preparadas se encargarán de levantar el acta. Todas las propuestas que la población haga se tendrán en cuenta, no se someterán a votación, se asientan en el acta.

→ Las propuestas pueden ser:
Modificación: cuando se sugiere agregar, sustituir o eliminar una frase o palabra de un párrafo.
Adición: cuando se plantea agregar un párrafo nuevo porque se considera que la idea no está dicha en el proyecto.

¿CUÁL ES EL CAMINO A TRANSITAR HASTA LA PROCLAMACIÓN DE LA NUEVA CONSTITUCIÓN CUBANA?



- *Eliminación:* cuando se propone desechar un párrafo porque se cree que es innecesario o no se está de acuerdo con lo que expresa.
- *Dudas:* cuando se afirma que la idea expresada en un párrafo no queda clara o no se entiende.

Envío de las propuestas a la Comisión encargada de elaborar el proyecto de constitución

- Antes de las 48 horas siguientes a la reunión, quienes elaboren el acta la entregarán al equipo municipal, encargado de extraer la información en forma de propuestas. Luego, la reunirá el equipo provincial y pasará al equipo nacional.
- Las propuestas se organizarán por párrafos, de forma clara y precisa
- Por último, se elaborará el Informe de propuestas de la población, que le será entregado a la Comisión encargada de la Reforma Constitucional, para la valoración de las propuestas y reelaboración del documento

El documento vuelve a la Asamblea Nacional

- El texto regresa a la ANPP para volver a discutirse y someterse a aprobación.

Convocatoria a referendo

- El Consejo de Estado, de conformidad con lo acordado por la ANPP, ordena la publicación de la convocatoria a referendo en la Gaceta Oficial de la República de Cuba y designa a la Comisión Electoral Nacional.

Referendo

- El texto se somete a referendo popular mediante el voto secreto y directo de los ciudadanos.

Proclamación

- De ser respaldada por el pueblo, se proclama la Carta Magna que a partir de entonces será la vigente en Cuba

EDICIÓN: LISSY RODRÍGUEZ GUERRERO
Desde: www.granma.cu

THE PATH TO PROCLAMATION FOR CUBA'S NEW CONSTITUTION

While proclamation of the country's new Constitution is still several months away, Granma summarizes the steps to be taken

By Lissy Rodríguez Guerrero

The popular consultation has begun, and streets, workplaces, schools, and even houses have become places to debate, legislate, and take charge of the times to come.

Still several months away is the proclamation of the country's new Constitution, one of the world's most modern, as specialists in the field have said, given the additions proposed by the commission charged with writing the first draft, which was subsequently approved by the National Assembly of People's Power.

Nonetheless, already taking shape among Cubans is the document that will provide the country a useful economic, political, and social order, and protect citizens' rights: the new Cuban Constitution.

But what is the route to proclamation of this new Constitution?

Granma summarizes the steps to be taken...

1. Popular consultation meetings are held, in which citizens express their opinions and suggest changes to the proposed draft:

- 135,000 meetings between August 13 and November 15

- The Cuban people will meet in workplaces, schools, and communities - and may participate in more than one meeting.

2. Processing of proposals is conducted by the Center for Socio-political Studies and Opinion:

- The proposed Constitution consists of a preamble and 224 articles, divided into 11 titles, 24 chapters and 16 sections.

- To assist in the analysis and processing of opinions, each paragraph has been numbered, a total of 755.

- Two-person teams leading meetings will be responsible for the minutes. All proposals made by the population will be taken into account. No votes will be conducted; all are to be recorded in the minutes.

The proposals may be:

- Modification: A suggestion to add, replace, or delete a phrase or word in a paragraph.

- Addition: A proposal to add a new paragraph because the idea is not stated in the draft.

- Elimination: A proposal to eliminate a paragraph because the citizen considers it unnecessary or does not agree with the content.

- Clarification: A request for clarification when the citizen believes an idea expressed in a paragraph is not clear or understandable.

3. Submission of proposals to the Commission in charge of preparing the draft Constitution:

- Within 48 hours of each meeting, those who took minutes must deliver them to the municipal team, which organizes the information in the form of proposals. The provincial team meets and forwards proposals to the national team.

- Proposals will be organized by paragraph, clearly and precisely

- Finally, a Proposal Report will be prepared, which will be submitted to the Constitutional Reform Commission, for the evaluation of proposals and the re-writing of the document as deemed necessary

4. The document returns to the National Assembly:

- The amended text is returned to the National Assembly for a final discussion and is submitted to a vote for approval.

5. A referendum is called:

- The Council of State, in accordance with the National Assembly decision, orders the publication of a convocation for a referendum in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Cuba, and appoints members of the National Electoral Commission

6. Referendum:

- The text is submitted for approval in a referendum via a direct, secret ballot vote by citizens.

7. Proclamation:

- Upon receiving the people's backing, the Constitution is proclaimed and as of that moment becomes the law of the land in Cuba.

From: www.en.granma.cu



By Janine Solanki

As August came to a close, it was with the last few events of a Pride season full of marches, parades, festivals and all sorts of activities to celebrate the gains of the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer) community, and to continue fighting against discrimination and to advance LGBTQ+ rights.

Every year, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) participates in Pride events throughout the summer with a simple message - "Cuba says: LGBTQ rights are human rights." Unfortunately, due to mainstream media lies and misinformation, this statement comes as a surprise to some people. This is why VCSC is out at Pride to let people know that Cuba is a leading force in advancing LGBTQ rights!

On **August 4**, VCSC participated in the annual Dyke March, holding a banner reading "Cuba says: LGBTQ rights are human rights" while marching down Commercial Drive to the Grandview Park festival. VCSC also had a table at the festival, where many people stopped by to get more information. They were intrigued to find out that Cuba is making huge strides in LGBTQ rights, where gender reassignment surgery is free, same-sex couples have the right to adopt, and most recently the right to same-sex marriage is being added to their new constitution.

The next day on **August 5**, VCSC organizers and supporters decorated a vehicle with banners, flags and all sorts of colourful adornments, and put on their bright matching t-shirts reading "Humanity is Diversity! Viva Cuba!". The VCSC contingent of the 40th Annual Vancouver Pride Parade walked down the parade route through downtown Vancouver holding a

banner for hundreds of thousands of cheering on-lookers to see, reading "Cuba says: Sexual diversity is not dangerous! Homophobia and Transphobia are!" The parade ended at the Sunset Beach festival, where VCSC had an information table and was able to talk to many people about what Cuba is doing for LGBTQ rights.

On **August 9** VCSC organized a community event titled "Humanity is Diversity" in Vancouver, which started out with an introduction by Tamara Hansen, VCSC's coordinator, on why we have a lot to learn from Cuba's LGBTQ movement. The evening featured the documentary film "Mariela Castro's March: Cuba's LGBT Revolution" which gave a candid history of the early struggles of Cuba's LGBTQ community, to the inspiring achievements today. The film also follows the current projects against discrimination and to advance LGBTQ rights being led by the Cuban National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX). After the film, VCSC organizers Azza Rojbi and Janine Solanki showed photos and spoke about their experiences at Cuba's International Days Against Homophobia and Transphobia in 2016, which included conferences, an amazing gala show and a conga march against homophobia and transphobia through the streets of Havana. Before the event wrapped up, participants tested their knowledge of Cuba and the LGBTQ movement with a trivia game, complete with exciting prizes!

Later in August, the VCSC information table decked out with Cuban, Pride and Trans flags was also out all day at the **August 18** New Westminster Pride street festival, providing information and talking with many people at the busy festival.

Whether during Pride season or all year round, there is much to learn about and be inspired by Cuba's vibrant LGBTQ+ movement! To find out about more VCSC and Cuba solidarity events visit www.vancubasolidarity.com, or follow on Facebook and Twitter @VanCuba_VCSC

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U.S. IMPERIALISM HARDENS SANCTIONS AGAINST THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF VENEZUELA

By Alison Bodine

On August 6, 2018, thousands of people in Venezuela marched in the streets of the capital city Caracas in support of President Nicolas Maduro and the Bolivarian revolutionary government of Venezuela. They marched despite the violence and terror that had been inflicted on their country with the August 4 assassination attempt against President Maduro carried out by the right-wing criminal group called "Soldados de Franelas, (Soldiers in T-shirts)." With banners, signs, and flags held high they proudly marched to defend their sovereignty, self-determination and democratic rights.

On that day, the people of Venezuela marched as they have been doing for 20 years, since the election of President Hugo Chavez in 1998. In the face of a brutal imperialist sanctions regime and constant meddling in their internal affairs by the U.S. government and their allies, including Canada, the people of Venezuela are organizing and mobilizing; in the streets, in communities, in workplaces, and in schools, building the Bolivarian revolutionary process and defending their independence and sovereignty. In the face of this terrorist attack on their democratically elected President, the people of Venezuela responded with strength and unity.

Sanctioning the Government or the People of Venezuela?

Illegal and criminal sanctions are being levelled against Venezuela by the United

States, Canada, the European Union, Switzerland and Panama. These sanctions combined with continued imperialist support for Venezuela's violent counter-revolutionary right-wing have imposed a manufactured crisis on the people of Venezuela.

This brutal regime of sanctions has made it impossible for the government of Venezuela to interact with the world financial and trade markets normally. The U.S. sanctions, added to the classification of Venezuela as an "extraordinary threat" to the national security of the United States by President Obama in 2015, have destroyed Venezuela's credit rating, further strangling the economy. This means that the government of Venezuela is unable to buy the medicines, foodstuffs and basic that the people of Venezuela need. It doesn't have the cash or the credit that it needs to maintain a normally functioning economy.

As stated by Alfred de Zayas, United Nations Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order in his official Report to the UN released in August 2018, "Modern-day economic sanctions and blockades are comparable with medieval sieges of towns with the intention of forcing them to surrender. Twenty-first-century sanctions attempt to bring not just a town, but sovereign countries

to their knees. A difference, perhaps, is that twenty-first-century sanctions are accompanied by the manipulation of public opinion through 'fake news,' aggressive public relations and a pseudo-human rights rhetoric to give the impression that a human rights 'end' justifies the criminal means."

This is the reality that the people of Venezuela are facing. Their human rights are being thrown about as collateral in a vicious imperialist campaign for "regime change." Sanctions are 300,000 doses of insulin held up in Venezuelan ports when companies refuse to accept payments due to sanctions, shipments of malaria medication from Colombia stopped due to U.S. pressure. Citgo, a Venezuelan government subsidiary in the U.S. barred from transferring dividends or sending profits; billions of dollars meant for the purchase of foods and medicines frozen in international financial services companies.

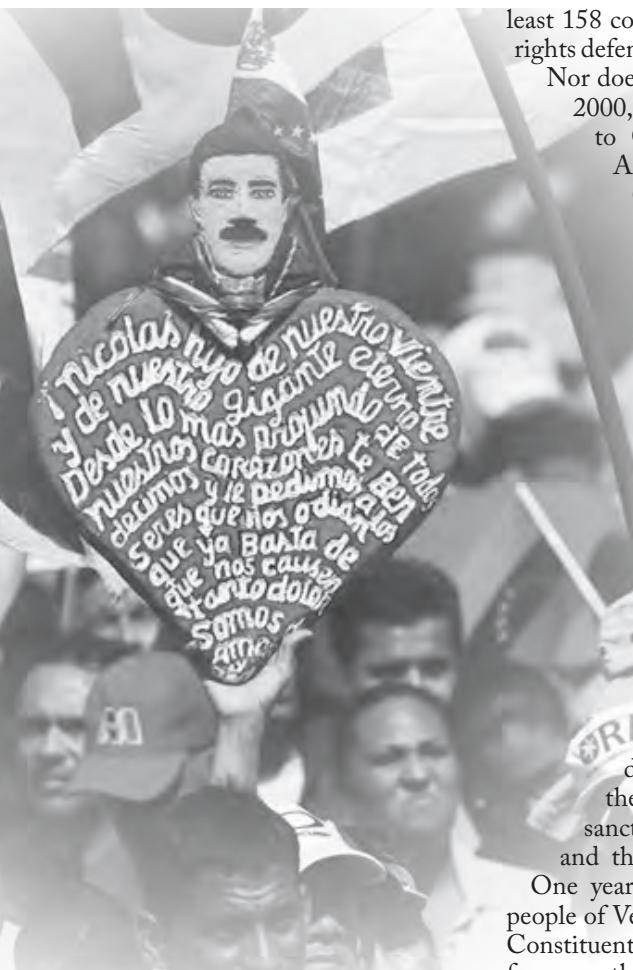
This month, U.S. sanctions against Venezuela were also used to silence an important voice against imperialism, by forcing shut-down of the Empire Files program on TeleSur. The TeleSur network, which was launched in 2005, is funded through Venezuela, Cuba, Uruguay, Nicaragua and Bolivia. U.S.

sanctions ultimately made it impossible for TeleSur to continue funding and supporting journalist Abby Martin and Empire Files, which has released hundreds of documentaries, including those that expose the role of the U.S. government and their allies in Venezuela.

The U.S. government has also been working to get other Latin American countries on board for their campaign of sanctions, isolation and intervention against the democratically elected government of Venezuela. Most recently, Defense Secretary James Mattis visited Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Colombia on a trip that as reported State Department "underscores the department's strong defense ties... adding that these relationships are critical to a collaborative, prosperous and secure Western Hemisphere."

Only three countries share borders with Venezuela, and Mattis visited two of them. No doubt top on the agenda was promoting further meddling and intervention in Venezuela. In fact, the stated purpose of previous trips to Latin America by U.S. government officials has included working to convince them to put sanctions on Venezuela.

Despite these escalating imperialist attacks, there are indications that the U.S. government is becoming frustrated that the people and government of Venezuela are not "falling to their knees" under the sanctions and playing into their plan for "regime change" in Venezuela. In an article published by the McClatchy news agency on August 24, anonymous senior officials from the U.S. government are quoted as saying "Some administration officials are worried that Venezuela's problems are becoming the new normal. People inside, who want change, whether it's the opposition, military or private sector need to take more aggressive steps," "We need the people to stand up," and "At some point, the region has to take a step back from its standard line of



we will not interfere in another country's politics."

To destroy the will of the people of Venezuela for self-determination, sovereignty and independence, the U.S. government and their allies must not only starve their bodies, but they must also silence their voices.

U.S. Government Sanctions Democracy

On the same day as the assassination attempt against President Maduro, Nikki Haley, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations wrote an Op-Ed in the Miami Herald titled "Colombia Is on the Right Path." Her article is an attack on the democratic system and expression of the people of Venezuela. In comparison to the "toxic dictatorship of Nicolás Maduro," Haley proposes the success of the Colombian "freedom model" as "an example for the region."

However, she fails to mention that in Colombia, which "presents a model for their democratic aspirations" for the people of Venezuela and Nicaragua, at

least 158 community leaders and human rights defenders have been killed in 2018.

Nor does she mention just how since 2000, the U.S. has given \$9.5 billion to Colombia in "U.S. Security Assistance." (Washington Office on Latin America – WOLA). In fact, Venezuela, Bolivia and Cuba are the only countries in Latin America that do not receive such "assistance" from the U.S. government. Colombia has also recently joined the U.S.-led military alliance NATO, sending a clear signal to the United States, Latin America and the world that they are firmly on the side of the U.S. government and their allies.

Time and time again the democratic expression of the people of Venezuela is sanctioned by the U.S. government and their allies, including Canada.

One year ago, on July 31, 2017, the people of Venezuela elected the National Constituent Assembly, putting an end to four months of violence and rioting by the U.S.-backed right-wing opposition that killed over 100 people. Following this election, the U.S. government increased illegal sanctions against Venezuela as U.S. President Trump declared that a military intervention in Venezuela is an option that the U.S. "certainly could pursue."

When the people of Venezuela went to the polls for the May 20 Presidential election, they knew that re-electing President Maduro would result in more sanctions and hardships for the Venezuelan economy, but over 5.8 million people, 67.7% of the vote, still cast their ballots for Maduro.

As with the other 24 national elections held in Venezuela since the Bolivarian revolutionary process began, international observers declared the election to be free, fair and transparent. This Presidential election used the same system of voting and democratic process as when former U.S. President Jimmy Carter declared Venezuelan elections to be the "best in the world."

People and Government of Venezuela are Defying Imperialism

Over the 20 years of the Bolivarian process in Venezuela, the majority of people in Venezuela have experienced a massive change in their quality of life. Through Venezuela's government programs known as Missions, primary healthcare has been brought to the most vulnerable people of Venezuela; more than 2.7 million Venezuelans have been taught to read, and over 2 million homes have been given to low-income Venezuelans. In 2015, the UN announced that Venezuela had reduced malnutrition 50%, following their announcement in 2013 that extreme hunger and poverty in Venezuela had also been reduced by 50%, all major milestones in the UN's Millennium Development Goals.

Gains of this magnitude were only possible when the United States and their allies were kicked out of the country, as Venezuelans began working to reverse the devastating effects of over 500 years of colonialism and capitalist exploitation of their lands and peoples.

These are the gains that empower the people of Venezuela to continue to fight back against imperialism today. In response to increasing sanctions, threats and intervention by the U.S. government and their allies the government and people of Venezuela continue building their revolutionary project.

When multi-national corporations such as Clorox, Kimberly Clark and Kellogg's shut down their factories in Venezuela, the Venezuelan government nationalized them to maintain their production of products vital to the people of Venezuela. That is how a Kimberly Clark plant manufacturing diapers and tissues were transformed into the Cacique Maracay

Productive Plant, named after an Indigenous leader who fought against Spanish colonialization.

Despite nationalizations and an effort to diversify the economy, the majority of basic goods and food in Venezuela are still produced and distributed by the capitalist class of Venezuela. This has allowed them to wage an economic war through slow-downs in production, price gouging, speculation, hoarding, boycott and economic destabilization. The government of Venezuela is arresting and prosecuting those responsible for the economic sabotage, while at the same time utilizing the power of community organization to ensure that food and basic goods make it into the hands of the people who need it most in Venezuela through the CLAP (Committees for Local Distribution) program.

Despite the devastation imposed on their economy, Venezuela also continues to build regional solidarity through the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), which was founded under the leadership of Hugo Chávez and Cuba's Fidel Castro. ALBA allows for trade between countries through goods and services, as well as through monetary exchange.

On the ground in Venezuela, people continue to support their democratically elected government of President Maduro and the Bolivarian revolutionary process, not only through votes but in their actions and organizing in all sectors of Venezuelan society. Through building communes, social missions and social movements, people in Venezuela are mobilized in defense of their democratically elected

government, and the gains that they have achieved through the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

Why working people must defend Venezuela

From August 31 to September 11, the United States, Canada, the UK and eight other right-wing Latin American countries are carrying out the "UNITAS LIX" military exercises in Colombia, a country that shares a 2,200km border with Venezuela. This is no coincidence. As the U.S. government and their allies, including Canada, expand draconian sanctions, their threats and rhetoric for further intervention, including military, also escalate.

It is increasingly urgent for peace-loving people around the world to take an objective look at what is happening in Venezuela today. If Venezuela wasn't attacking imperialist interests in Latin America, if they were not threatening U.S. hegemony, they would not be under constant attack. The people of Venezuela and the government of President Maduro are defending their sovereignty, self-determination and human and democratic rights. These are rights that are inherent to all peoples and oppressed nations, and they must be defended.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette



President Nicolas Maduro gives a collective land title to Yendi Eraso Gonzalez, campesino leader from Merida state. April 10, 2018



FROM PROTESTS ON THE STREETS TO THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN, VANCOUVER ACTIVISTS DEMAND: U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!

By *Janine Solanki*

On August 4, 2018, an assassination attempt was carried out against the democratically elected President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro. Drones armed with explosives detonated above a public event where Maduro was speaking, injuring seven people and putting the lives of the President and Venezuelan people at risk.

The mainstream media in Canada and the U.S. are constantly demonizing the Venezuelan President Maduro and the Bolivarian Revolution. This attack is one of the many violent actions that Venezuela's right-wing, the U.S.-backed opposition has taken to try to turn back Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution which has made vast improvements for the standards and quality of life for poor and

working Venezuelan people. Despite these violent and illegal actions, the western media still falsely paint the opposition in a sympathetic light.

Another vicious chapter in the campaign to overthrow President Maduro is the brutal sanctions against Venezuela, by the U.S. government and their allies, including Canada. The sanctions being imposed on the people of Venezuela are an act of war; preventing the import of vital foods and medicines, while at the same time cutting Venezuela off from receiving payments for their exports and limiting their access to financing and foreign currency.

Two days after the attempted assassination, people in Venezuela poured into the streets in mass demonstrations in support of President Maduro and the Bolivarian revolutionary process. Here in Vancouver, Canada, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign held a picket action on August 10 in support and defense of Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution.

Activists and supporters of Venezuela gathered together in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver, holding picket signs high and chanting to demand "U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!" and "No to Sanctions, No to Threats!" Between rounds of energetic picketing, the protesters gathered together to hear from local speakers who spoke against the sanctions imposed by Canada and the U.S. The demonstrators condemned the criminal and dangerous assassination attempt against Nicolas Maduro, the President of Venezuela.

The protest then moved up to the busy downtown plaza at the Vancouver Art Gallery, where passers-by were attracted to the giant Venezuelan flag setup by a Venezuela information table. Organizers were able to have discussions with people who stopped at the table and provided them with literature about the real situation in Venezuela. Teams of activists talked to people passing by and collected signatures on a petition demanding that the U.S. and Canada end their sanctions on Venezuela, and respect Venezuela's right to



Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign in front of the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver, Canada August 10, 2018.

self-determination.

Beyond these important street actions, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign was also active on social media this last month. August 14 marked one year since U.S. President Trump's expansion of sanctions against Venezuela. On this day, Venezuela supporters around the world and here in Vancouver participated, posting their photos on Twitter and holding signs reading #EndVenezuelaSanctions and #SanctionsAreWar.

This international support has recently been organized into a new campaign, of which Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign is a founding member. The North America Campaign to End U.S. and Canada Sanctions Against Venezuela is calling on supporters to sign on to the call to action at <https://afgj.org/campaign-to-end-us-and-canada-sanctions-against-venezuela>. This new initiative promotes more coordination and cooperation that will build stronger actions in defense of Venezuela and against sanctions on Venezuela.

With right-wing violence and imperialist attacks increasing, it is now more important than ever before that peace-loving people in the U.S. and Canada join with the people of Venezuela and unite to defend Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination! To find out about to join the campaign and the next action from the FTT Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, visit www.firethistime.net or follow on Facebook and Twitter @FTT_np

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

Battle of Ideas Press

Revolution & Counter Revolution
in Venezuela



By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

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U.S. Sanctions SHUT DOWN 'The Empire Files' with Abby Martin

By The Empire Files

The Empire Files is temporarily appealing for donations on a one-time and monthly basis to continue production in the midst of US attacks on the TeleSUR Network.

As a result of US sanctions against Venezuela, The Empire Files has been forced to completely shut down operations.

The Empire Files, which airs on TeleSUR throughout Latin America and on Free Speech TV and The Real News Network in the United States, has been funded through a contract with the TeleSUR network. As Abby Martin's primary broadcast, it has released over 100 documentaries, interviews and on-the-ground exposés from battlefields in Palestine, Venezuela and beyond.

As a result of financial attacks by the US government on the primary source of TeleSUR's funding, production was halted before the completion of Empire Files Season Two.

Season Three, contracted for 26 episodes, was scheduled to begin on July 1. But with the US government blocking wire transfers that originate in Venezuela, the ability to receive funding has not been possible.

For over a year, funding has been sporadic and often delayed. The Empire Files has been operating by alternating between waiting for late payments and funding production out-of-pocket.

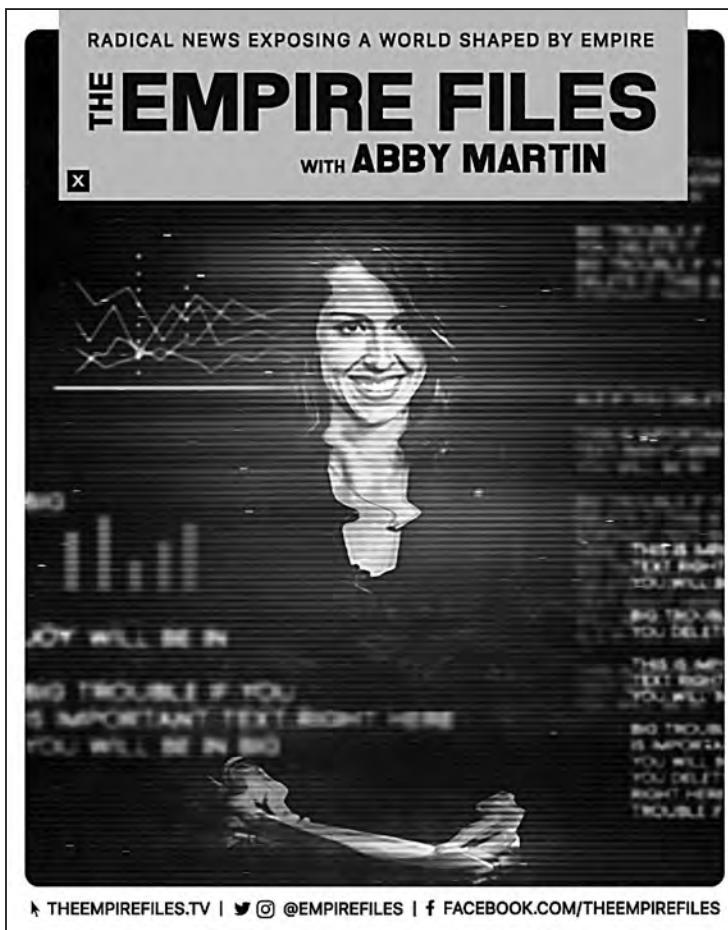
However, with US attacks and sanctions intensifying, the ability to receive funds appears to have been cut-off completely.

Contract TeleSUR journalists elsewhere, including at Empire Files, have had funding

blocked by the US government for over 6 months. Even wire transfers not originating in Venezuela, but ally countries which also fund TeleSUR, have been severed.

There appears to be no solution, and no end in sight, to this ongoing financial attack.

The Empire Files officially halted all



production on May 27, and had to cut all staff prior to that. But we have been holding-off on an official announcement in hopes that the wall put in place by the Trump Administration would be overcome.

We are making this announcement now

because, after numerous attempts and constant rejections of all types of fund transfers, we do not believe this barrier will be removed in the near future.

The depth of US attacks

The US State Department has been involved in regime-change projects in Venezuela since the election of the late President Hugo Chavez, first expressed by a violent coup in 2002. During that coup, Venezuela's state media and pro-government media were shutdown by the US-backed junta. Yet economic sanctions on Venezuela were not implemented until the Obama Administration, in 2015.

The Trump Administration has taken these sanctions to new heights. The most recent escalation came on May 21, 2018, the day after President Maduro democratically won reelection—apparently to punish the Venezuelan people for electing the “wrong” candidate.

Today, the US sanctions on Venezuela are the worst sanctions on any country in the region since those against Nicaragua in the 1980s, according to Mark Weisbrot of the Center for Economic and Policy Research—a time when the Reagan Administration was waging a full-blown, bloody war against the Nicaraguan people. Similarly it is Venezuela's poor and working class who are, by design, suffering most from the sanctions today.

These economic attacks cannot be viewed on their own, but part-in-parcel of a regime-change operation—while this is just one front in the US strategy, the sanctions are coupled with violent US-backed coup attempts in Venezuela, including the August 4 assassination attempt on President Maduro.

TeleSUR has always been included as a target for its association with the government. A thwarted US-backed coup plot in 2015 included plans to bomb the TeleSUR news building in Caracas. In 2017, a TeleSUR news team was ambushed by US-backed opposition forces and nearly lynched—one TeleSUR reporter was shot in the back during the assault.

Likewise, Abby Martin and Empire Files producer Mike Prysnar were the target of pro-coup politicians and journalists based in Caracas and Miami, leading to hundreds

of death threats and causing them to flee Venezuela where they were conducting on-the-ground reporting.

In addition, TeleSUR—along with the other main left-wing news source on Venezuela, Venezuela Analysis—were recently targets of online censorship. Already hit with “warnings” and “sensitive content” bans on YouTube and Twitter, their pages were recently deleted (although later reinstated) by Facebook. This was the second time the TeleSUR English page was removed without warning or explanation by Facebook. Facebook is currently collaborating with the Atlantic Council—stacked with CIA agents, Iraq war architects, Big Oil and the weapons industry—to decide which media outlets “sow discord.”

With only rhetoric of increased aggression coming from the Trump Administration, including threats of all-out US military bombing and invasion, there is no reason to think this multi-pronged attack will subside.

The future of The Empire Files

The entire Empire Files team—which has included a variety of dedicated videographers, editors, animators, graphic designers, composers, audio engineers, writers, researchers, interns and more—has spent nearly three years doing dedicated, rigorous, and sometimes life-threatening work to deliver a high-quality, politically important show once a week.

From the hidden casualties on the US-Mexico border, to environmental disasters in the endangered rainforest, to the most-viewed reporting on the crisis in Venezuela—interviews with President Rafael Correa, Cornel West, Noam Chomsky, Ahed Tamimi, and other important figures—profiles of often-unheard voices of migrant domestic workers, young revolutionary activists, immigrant children, hurricane victims, third-party candidates and more—to in-depth educational documentaries on socialism, the crimes of the US Empire, and histories and crises hidden by the mainstream media—The Empire Files has been extremely proud to make this small contribution to a

broader movement for change.

But we do not intend to stop this project as long as there are possibilities to continue.

We are prepared to resume production of weekly programs for TeleSUR as soon as blocks on funding are lifted, or circumvented—however, this could mean six months, a year, or never. We know our colleagues at TeleSUR have been fighting for a solution for us and other contractors, and will continue to do so.

In the meantime, we are appealing to our



Abby Martin interviews violent right-wing protesters in Venezuela for "The Empire Files"

supporters for donations on a one-time basis or as monthly sustainers to restart production, rehire staff and release new episodes for as long as funding permits. Current expenses include \$6000 for Empire Files journalists in Gaza.

Unreleased Empire Files content from Gaza and Colombia

In the immediate term, we hope to raise enough funds to complete post-production on our recent, unreleased footage.

Most importantly, our urgent footage and interviews captured by Empire Files journalists in Palestine's besieged Gaza Strip. This includes never-before-seen footage of the Great March of Return, including

new instances of brutality by Israeli forces against unarmed protesters at the border fence, interviews with the family of slain medic Razan Al-Najar and wounded medical workers, and much more.

In addition, we have hours of unreleased footage of Abby Martin on-the-ground in Colombia's “peace zones,” featuring interviews with FARC leaders and members, and a rare first-hand look at the country's historic peace process as it hangs in the balance after the victory of the far right in the June 17

Presidential election.

If we raise enough money to cover the cost of releasing all of this important content over a span of several episodes, we can then dedicate funds to new filming and production that is not subject to attacks by the Pentagon. This includes documentaries on everything from Trump's war machine, to the hidden repression of environmental activists.

We ask for your support to expose the crimes of the US Empire at this critical time, as well as your solidarity with TeleSUR and Venezuela's right to self-determination.

For media and interview requests, contact theempirefiles@gmail.com

From: mediaroots.org Aug 22, 2018

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sustainer on
Patreon



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donation

Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign Condemns the Assassination Attempt Against President Maduro! U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!

August 4, 2018

Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign strongly condemns the August 4, 2018 assassination attempt in Caracas, Venezuela against the democratically elected Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

Reports indicate that the attack was carried out by drones armed with explosives at a military event where President Maduro was giving a speech, callously putting the lives of many Venezuelan people at risk. Venezuela's Information Minister Jorge Rodriguez has reported that President Maduro was not harmed, however, seven National Guard soldiers were injured.

This attack is yet another example that Venezuela's violent right-wing opposition, supported by the United States and their imperialist allies, including Canada, continues to use violence and terrorism to attempt to overthrow the government of Venezuela and reverse the gains of the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

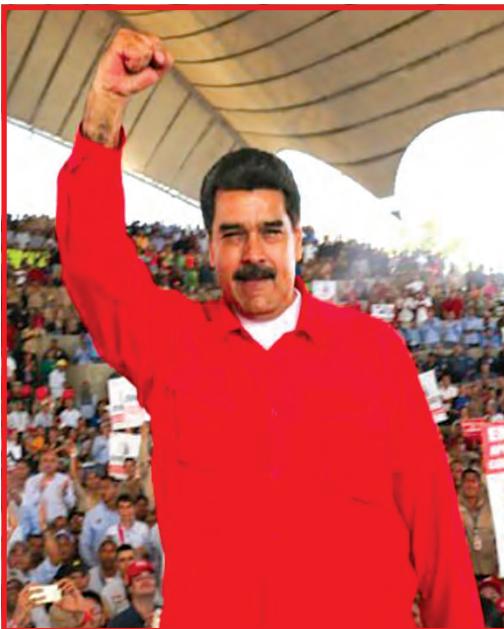
As people living in the U.S. and Canada we must not forget the hand that the U.S. government and their allies played in the 2002 failed coup d'état against President Chavez, and the continued role that the governments of the U.S., Canada and the European Union have forcing "regime change" in Venezuela. As peace-loving people in Canada, we denounce the role of the government of Canada in supporting the violent right-wing opposition in Venezuela and demand an immediate end to all threats and sanctions against Venezuela.

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign stands with President Maduro and the revolutionary people of Venezuela as they defend their sovereignty, self-determination and the Bolivarian revolutionary process!

U.S. AND CANADA RESPECT THE SOVEREIGNTY & SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE!

NO TO REGIME CHANGE IN VENEZUELA!

NO TO SANCTIONS & THREATS AGAINST VENEZUELA!



¡La Campaña de Solidaridad con Venezuela del Movimiento por Justicia Social "Fire This Time" condena el intento de asesinato contra el presidente Maduro!

¡EE.UU. Y CANADÁ SACAN SUS MANOS DE VENEZUELA!

* EN ESPAÑOL *

4 de agosto de 2018

La Campaña de Solidaridad con Venezuela del Movimiento por Justicia Social "Fire This Time" condena enérgicamente el intento de asesinato contra el presidente venezolano elegido democráticamente, Nicolás Maduro del 4 de agosto de 2018 en Caracas, Venezuela.

Los informes indican que el ataque fue llevado a cabo por drones armados con explosivos en un evento militar donde el presidente Maduro daba un discurso, poniendo en peligro la vida de muchos venezolanos. El ministro de Información de Venezuela, Jorge Rodríguez, informó que el presidente Maduro no resultó herido, sin embargo, siete soldados de la Guardia Nacional resultaron heridos.

Este ataque es otro ejemplo de que la violenta oposición derechista venezolana, apoyada por los Estados Unidos y sus aliados imperialistas, incluido Canadá, continúa usando la violencia y el terrorismo para intentar derrocar al gobierno de Venezuela y revertir los logros del proceso revolucionario bolivariano.

Como personas que viven en los EE. UU. y Canadá no debemos olvidar el papel que el gobierno de EE. UU. y sus aliados desempeñaron en el fallido golpe de estado de 2002 contra el presidente Chávez, y el papel continuo que los gobiernos de los EE. UU., Canadá y la Unión Europea han forzado el "cambio de régimen" en Venezuela. Como personas amantes de la paz en Canadá, denunciamos el papel del gobierno de Canadá en el apoyo a la oposición derechista violenta en Venezuela y exigimos el final inmediato de todas las amenazas y sanciones contra Venezuela.

La Campaña de Solidaridad con Venezuela del Movimiento por Justicia Social "Fire This Time" se asienta con el presidente Maduro y el pueblo revolucionario de Venezuela en su defensa de su soberanía, autodeterminación y el proceso revolucionario bolivariano.

ESTADOS UNIDOS Y CANADÁ RESPETAN LA SOBERANÍA Y LA AUTODETERMINACIÓN DEL PUEBLO VENEZOLANO!

NO AL CAMBIO DE REGÍMENES EN VENEZUELA!

NO A SANCIONES Y AMENAZAS CONTRA VENEZUELA!

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela strongly rejects the communiqué issued by the U.S. Department of State -regarding the terrorist attack on August 4th, which was planned and executed from the U.S. territory- and its cynical allegations, which, once more, are aimed at interfering in the internal politics of Venezuela by encouraging the political group that promotes destabilization and violence in our country.

The State that takes pride in undertaking a war on terrorism -and under this pretext is currently leading no less than 7 armed conflicts around the globe- understates through a biased communiqué the seriousness of the facts and makes false accusations against the Venezuelan judicial processes, showing its contempt for our legislation.

Venezuela is not the country that has established illegal detention centres all over the world where is sought to extract information from the detainees by employing methods globally recognized

Venezuela rejects statement from the US State Department about failed attempted assassination

Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Relations



August 2018 - Venezuelans rally in support of President Maduro after assassination attempt.

as torture, all this endorsed by the highest country's leadership. It was not the President of Venezuela but President Donald Trump, who publicly stated: "Torture works".

Venezuela is not the country that deprives the liberty of immigrants in detention centres indefinitely and is not the country whose migration policy even allows the separation of children from their parents, causing them not only emotional trauma and systematic

violations of their rights but also exposing them to atrocities such as sexual abuse and forced consumption of psychotropic substances, as denounced by the U.S. Judge Dolly Gee.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is open to U.S. government participation in the investigation -and even invited it-, provided of course that this participation serves to perform a true search for justice and not an attempt to prevent it or for protection of terrorists, as it happened in the past with figures like Luis Posada Carriles: A self-confessed terrorist whose surrender to Venezuelan authorities to duly serve his sentence was always denied.

If the politicians allied with the U.S. government interests commit crimes, it does

Continued on next page

President Maduro - 1 May, 2018



* EN ESPAÑOL *

El Gobierno de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela rechaza categóricamente el comunicado del Departamento de Estado en relación al atentado terrorista del 4 de agosto planificado y ejecutado desde el territorio estadounidense, así como sus cínicas acusaciones cuyo único propósito es interferir una vez más en la política interna venezolana favoreciendo al grupo político que promueve la desestabilización y la violencia en el país.

Un Estado que se jacta de luchar contra el terrorismo y que bajo esta causa lidera hoy en día no menos de 7 conflictos armados alrededor del mundo, minimiza con un comunicado parcializado, la gravedad de los hechos y levanta falsas acusaciones contra los procesos judiciales venezolanos en abierto desconocimiento de nuestras leyes.

Venezuela no es el país que ha sembrado alrededor del mundo centros ilegales de detención donde se busca extraer información a los detenidos utilizando métodos reconocidos alrededor del mundo como tortura y que cuentan con el aval de su más alta dirigencia. No fue el Presidente de Venezuela, sino Donald Trump quien aseguró

Venezuela rechaza comunicado del Departamento de Estado de EEUU sobre magnicidio frustrado

Ministerio del Poder Popular para
Relaciones Exteriores



Agosto de 2018: los venezolanos se manifiestan en apoyo del presidente Maduro después de un intento de asesinato.

públicamente que la "tortura funciona". Asimismo, Venezuela no es el país que recluye a inmigrantes de manera indefinida en centros de detención ni que ha llegado hasta el punto de separar a niños y niñas de sus padres, conduciéndolos no solo a traumas emocionales y a la violación sistemática de sus derechos, sino también exponiéndolos a atrocidades como el abuso sexual y hasta el consumo forzado de sustancias psicotrópicas, tal y como denunció la jueza Dolly Gee.

El Gobierno de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela está abierto e inclusive invitó al gobierno estadounidense a participar de la investigación, siempre y cuando ésta sea en un espíritu de verdadera búsqueda de la justicia y no un intento de encubrirla ni de proteger a terroristas, tal y como ha hecho en el pasado con figuras como Luis Posada Carriles, terrorista confeso, a quien nunca entregaron a las autoridades venezolanas para cumplir su debida pena.

Continúa en la página siguiente

not turn them into political prisoners but into criminals, and the Venezuelan justice is to continue fighting against the impunity in order to guarantee justice, stability and peace throughout our national territory.

The government of the United States has shown in several times through its criminal blockade against our country that it is not on the side of the Venezuelan people. Unfortunately, although not surprising, the U.S. once more has been given the opportunity to take side with the justice, but instead it preferred to be on the side of violence and unconstitutional behaviours.

In spite of the attacks and interfering attempts, the Venezuelan People continues its path towards peace, progress and social justice together with the Bolivarian Government, as it did during the constituent convocation of 2017: In defense of our sovereignty and independence.

Caracas, August 17th, 2018



August 2018, the Mayor of Caracas, Erika Farías rallies in support of President Maduro after assassination attempt

Que los políticos aliados con los intereses del gobierno estadounidense cometan delitos, no los convierte en presos políticos, sino en criminales y la justicia venezolana continuará luchando contra la impunidad para garantizar la justicia, la estabilidad y la paz en todo el territorio nacional.

El gobierno de Estados Unidos, con su criminal bloqueo en contra de nuestro país, ha demostrado en numerosas ocasiones que no se encuentra del lado del Pueblo venezolano. Es lamentable, pero no sorprende, que una vez más, teniendo la oportunidad de colocarse de lado de la justicia, Estados Unidos prefiera permanecer del lado de la violencia y de las salidas anticonstitucionales. El Pueblo venezolano, a pesar de los ataques e intentos injerencistas, así como lo hizo durante la convocatoria constituyente de 2017, continua su rumbo decidido hacia la paz, el progreso y la justicia social junto al Gobierno Bolivariano, en defensa de nuestra soberanía e independencia.

Caracas, 17 de agosto de 2018



The campaign invites you and/or your organization to endorse this call against the illegal, unjust and cruel sanctions being inflicted on the people of Venezuela. >> Please visit: afgi.org <<

Ordinary Venezuelans are hurt by sanctions imposed by the US and Canada

The elderly grandmother who cannot get insulin for her diabetes, the child who is undernourished during an important stage of development, families who cannot afford to feed and clothe their children as a result of hyperinflation. US and Canadian sanctions are precipitating a rapid economic decline in Venezuela and ordinary Venezuelans are the primary victims.

Unilateral sanctions are illegal

On May 21, the day after the re-election of Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro, the US further expanded economic sanctions against Venezuela. Both the US and Canada have sanctions targeting senior Venezuelan government officials. These sanctions severely hamper the government's ability to engage with international financial entities. Furthermore, unilateral sanctions violate the human rights of the Venezuelan people and are illegal under the charters of the OAS and the UN. The imposed sanctions prevent the government from borrowing money from major financial institutions and from repatriating dividends earned by state subsidiaries abroad, restricting Venezuela's ability to import vital foods and medicines. The US and Canada hypocritically claim to be concerned about the humanitarian situation in Venezuela, while their sanctions regimes are deliberately designed to asphyxiate the Venezuelan economy.

Sanctions are a form of economic war and can be a prelude to actual war

In addition to the economic war being waged against Venezuela through sanctions, recent reports as well as public statements by US officials have made clear that a military option against Venezuela is under serious consideration.

As people in the US and Canada, we have the responsibility to end our governments' practice of illegal foreign intervention, including the current economic sanctions against the people of Venezuela. These sanctions are a collective punishment designed to create enough human misery to bring about the overthrow of a democratically-elected government, including via a military coup. Economic sanctions violate Venezuela's national sovereignty and the basic rights of Venezuelan citizens.

The campaign invites you and/or your organization to endorse this call against the illegal, unjust and cruel sanctions being inflicted on the people of Venezuela.

Initial Signers

- Akinyele K. Umoja, Founding Member, New Afrikan People's Organization
- Alexander Main, Director for International Policy, Center for Economic and Policy Research
- Alliance for Global Justice
- Common Frontiers
- Dan Kovalik, Adjunct Professor of International Human Rights, University of Pittsburgh School of Law
- Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice – Venezuela Solidarity Campaign
- Frederick B. Mills, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy Department of History and Government Bowie State University
- Gerardo Renique, Associate Professor, City College (SUNY)
- Gregory Wilpert, Venezuelananalysis.com
- International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity
- Ivan Dario Hernandez, Artist, Venezuela Popular Resistance
- Shirley Pate, DC Venezuela Action Network
- Shontae Cannon-Buckley, Co-owner, Burning Books, Buffalo, New York
- Stansfield Smith, Chicago ALBA Solidarity
- Susan Scott, Member, National Lawyers Guild
- Task Force on the Americas
- Teri Mattson, Founder, The Intrepid News Fund
- Tom Gallagher, Chair, San Francisco Progressive Democrats of America
- William Camacaro, Venezuelan Activist/ Radio Host WBAI Pacifica Network

*By Manuel Yepe**

By examining our evolutionary past and history as egalitarian, cooperative, and supportive hunter-gatherers in the primitive era, we dispel the false idea that human beings, by their very nature, are competitive, aggressive, and individualistic.

Human beings have all the psychological and social skills to live differently and inequality is not inevitable.

This is the view of epidemiology professors Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson, authors of several books and other studies on the effects of social inequalities in the United States. In their new book entitled *The Inner Level*, they rely on a solid set of arguments to demonstrate that “inequality devours the heart of the intimate world and the social anxieties of the vast majority of the population. In *The Inner Level*, the evidence shows the impact of inequality on mental well-being, but is only part of the new situation. Professors Pickett and Wilkinson question two key myths that some use to justify the perpetuation and tolerance of social inequality.

Let's address the misconception that current levels of inequality reflect the existence of a justifiable meritocracy in which those of greater natural capacity rise and those who are incapable languish at heart. We understand that, on the contrary, it is inequalities in outcomes that limit equal opportunities; differences in achievements and achievements

themselves are driven by inequality, not its consequences.

Pickett and Wilkinson argue that inequality is a major obstacle to the creation of sustainable economies that serve to optimize the health and well-being of both people and the planet. They

material standards of living, people living in relative poverty around the world had a strong sense of shame and self-hatred. Being at the bottom of the social scale feels the same if you live in a rich country as if you live in a very poor country.

While the vast majority of the population appears to be affected by inequality, we respond in different ways to the concerns raised by the way others view and judge us. One such way is to feel overwhelmed and oppressed by distrust, feelings of inferiority and depressed self-esteem, and that leads to high levels of depression and anxiety in more unequal societies, say the authors of *The Inner Level*. Psychotic symptoms, such as delusions of grandeur, are more common in more unequal countries, as is schizophrenia. Narcissism increases as income inequality increases, as measured by the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) from successive samples of the American population.

Another widespread response to the need to overcome what psychologists call the “social evaluative threat” is through drugs, alcohol or gambling, through comfort food, or through the use of status and conspicuous consumption. Those who live in more unequal places are more likely to spend money on expensive cars and to buy status goods; and are more likely to have high levels of personal debt because they try to prove that they are not “second-class people” by owning “first-class things.”

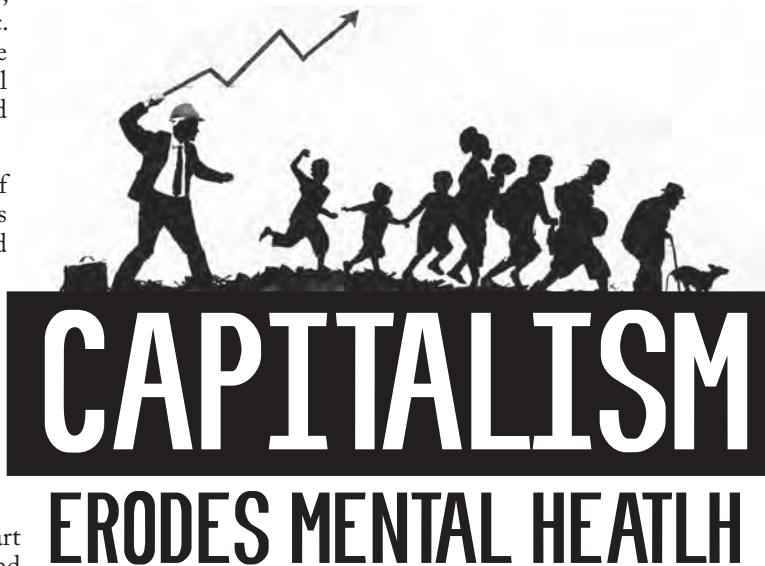
August 17, 2018.

Manuel E. Yepe, is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He was a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba's ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.

*A CubaNews translation. Edited by
Walter Lippmann.*

www.walterlippmann.com

www.englishmanuelyepe.wordpress.com



say this is because consumerism is about self-improvement and competition for status is intensifying with inequality.

A recent survey by the Mental Health Foundation found that at one point last year, 74% of adults in the UK were so stressed that they felt overwhelmed and unable to cope. One-third were suicidal and 16% had self-injured at some point in their lives. These figures were much higher among young people.

In the United States, death rates are rising steadily, especially for middle-aged white men and women, due to “desperation,” which includes deaths from drug and alcohol addiction as well as suicides and many car accidents. An epidemic of distress seems to be affecting some of the richest nations in the world.

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Studies in 28 European countries show that inequality increases status anxiety in all income groups, from the poorest 10% to the richest segment.

Another study on how people experience low social status, in both rich and poor countries, found that, despite huge differences in their

* EN ESPAÑOL *

Por Manuel Yepe

Especial para el diario POR ESTO! de Mérida, México.

Al examinar nuestro pasado evolutivo y nuestra historia como cazadores-recolectores igualitarios, cooperativos y solidarios en la comunidad primitiva, disipamos la falsa idea de que los seres humanos, por su propia naturaleza, son competitivos, agresivos e individualistas. Los seres humanos tenemos todas las aptitudes psicológicas y sociales para vivir de manera diferente y la desigualdad no es inevitable.

Así lo manifiestan los profesores de epidemiología Kate Pickett y Richard Wilkinson, autores de varios libros y otros estudios acerca de los efectos de las desigualdades sociales en Estados Unidos, en su nuevo libro titulado *The Inner Level* (El Nivel Íntimo), en el que se apoyan en un sólido conjunto de argumentos para demostrar que “la desigualdad devora el corazón del mundo íntimo y las ansiedades sociales de la gran mayoría de la población”. En *The Inner Level*, la evidencia que muestran los autores sobre el impacto de la desigualdad en el bienestar mental es sólo una parte de la nueva situación. Los profesores Pickett y Wilkinson cuestionan dos mitos clave que algunos utilizan para justificar la perpetuación y tolerancia de la desigualdad.

Cuando abordamos la falsa idea de que los niveles actuales de desigualdad reflejan la existencia de una justificable meritocracia en la que ascienden los de más capacidad natural y languidecen en el fondo los incapaces, comprendemos que, por el contrario, son las desigualdades en los resultados las que limitan la igualdad de oportunidades; las diferencias en los logros y los logros mismos son impulsados por la desigualdad, no sus consecuencias.

Pickett y Wilkinson, sostienen que la

desigualdad es un obstáculo importante para la creación de economías sostenibles que sirvan para optimizar la salud y el bienestar tanto de las personas como del planeta debido a que el consumismo tiene que ver con la mejora de uno mismo y la competencia por el estatus se intensificada con la desigualdad.

Una encuesta reciente de la Mental

de vida, en todo el mundo las personas que viven en la pobreza relativa tenían un fuerte sentimiento de vergüenza y autoodio. Estar en la parte inferior de la escala social se siente igual si se vive en un país rico que si se reside en uno muy pobre.

Aunque parece que la gran mayoría de la población está afectada por la desigualdad,

respondemos de diferentes maneras a las preocupaciones que genera la forma en que otros nos ven y nos juzgan. Una de esas maneras es sentirnos agobiados y oprimidos por la desconfianza, los sentimientos de inferioridad y la autoestima deprimida, y eso conduce a altos niveles de depresión y ansiedad en sociedades más desiguales, afirman los autores de *The Inner Level*. Los síntomas psicóticos, como los delirios de grandeza, son más comunes en los países más desiguales, al igual que

la esquizofrenia. El narcisismo aumenta a medida que aumenta la desigualdad de ingresos, según mediciones de la Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) a partir de muestras sucesivas en la población estadounidense.

Otra muy extendida respuesta a la necesidad de superar lo que los psicólogos llaman la “amenaza evaluativa social” es a través de las drogas, el alcohol o el juego, mediante la alimentación como recomfortante, o a través del consumo de estatus y el consumismo conspicuo. Aquellos que viven en lugares más desiguales son más propensos a gastar dinero en automóviles caros y a comprar bienes de estatus; y son más propensos a tener altos niveles de deuda personal porque tratan de demostrar que no son “gente de segunda clase” al poseer “cosas de primera clase”.

Agosto 17 de 2018.

Manuel E. Yepe Menéndez es periodista y se desempeña como Profesor adjunto en el Instituto Superior de las Relaciones Internacionales de La Habana.

www.manueleyepe.wordpress.com

EL CAPITALISMO EROSIONA LA SALUD MENTAL



Health Foundation halló que en un momento dado del pasado año el 74 % de los adultos en el Reino Unido estaban tan estresados que se sentían abrumados e incapaces de sobrellevar la situación. Un tercio tenía inclinaciones suicidas y el 16 % se había autolesionado en algún momento de su vida. Estas cifras eran mucho más altas entre los jóvenes.

En Estados Unidos, las tasas de mortalidad crecen sin cesar, sobre todo para hombres y mujeres blancos de mediana edad, debido a la “desesperación”, que incluyen las muertes por adicción a drogas y al alcohol, así como los suicidios y muchos accidentes de autos. Una epidemia de angustia parece estar afectando a algunas de las naciones más ricas del mundo.

Estudios realizados en 28 países europeos muestran que la desigualdad aumenta la ansiedad por el estatus en todos los grupos de ingresos, desde el 10% más pobre hasta el segmento más rico.

Otro estudio sobre cómo la gente experimenta un estatus social bajo, tanto en los países ricos como en los pobres, encontró que, a pesar de las enormes diferencias en sus niveles materiales

CUBA VS. AN UNJUST BLOCKADE

The blockade, congenital deafness and the language of the peoples

If there is still someone who believes that the economic, commercial, financial blockade of Cuba is an exaggeration on the part of authorities here, they can refer to the latest episode in the implementation of this hostile policy described as genocidal.

Gustavo Véliz, Cuba's ambassador in Antigua and Barbuda, received notification from FedEx, a multinational courier delivery services company based in the United States, stating that the mission's account in the country had been cancelled, as a result of the extra-territorial nature of the blockade imposed on Cuba.

According to the note, this is due to the fact that FedEx and its international subsidiaries are U.S. owned properties and subject to U.S. law, adding that the company could not handle deliveries to or from any part of a government on which sanctions have been imposed by the Office of Foreign Assets Control, as part of the legal framework for the control of exports.

"Cuba is subject to U.S. sanctions and therefore, we cannot transport any delivery from the government of Cuba at this time, and in the future they will be rejected for pick-up and returned to the remittent," the missive stated.

There are not enough pages in our newspaper to cite all the similar examples which have occurred over the 55 years of this hostile policy. Recalling one, not from the distant past either, is adequate to make evident the implicitly genocidal nature of the imperialists' blockade.

In 2016, Hurricane Matthew left Baracoa, in the far eastern region of the island, in ruins. At that time, as a result of U.S. law, Cuba's embassy in Ankara, Turkey, was not allowed to make a bank transfer, even though the eastern portion of Cuba was in a painful situation, being resolutely faced by the government, in need of all available funds.

The United Nations General Assembly has repudiated the U.S. blockade of Cuba for 25 consecutive years. On this stage, the entire world has supported resolutions to end the policy. Nevertheless, it appears that the deafness of the U.S. government is congenital, because it cannot understand the language of the people.

From: Granma.cu



VANCOUVER, MONTREAL, OTTAWA AND KIEV HIT THE STREETS TO DEMAND: HEY TRUMP! LIFT THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!

By Janine Solanki

For over 56 years, the Cuban people have been enduring an unjust U.S. blockade, which has negatively impacted their daily lives. One example of the cruel effects of the blockade is the damages caused to the Cuban healthcare system. In this sector alone, the monetary damage is estimated at more than \$87 million just in one year.

Despite all these challenges and obstacles by the United States, Cuba is world renowned for its universal health care system, which has achieved a lower infant mortality rate than many first world countries, including the United States and Canada!

On December 17, 2014, former U.S. President Barack Obama and former Cuban President Raul Castro made the historic announcement that they would be moving towards normalizing relations. Although positive first steps were made towards lifting the U.S. blockade on Cuba, this progress was stalled under the Obama administration. Now the Trump administration has made efforts to turn back completely the progress made.

Here in Vancouver, after the 2014 announcement Cuba solidarity activists mobilized to protest the U.S. blockade, knowing that a big push of public opinion was needed to keep this momentum going in the right direction. Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver (FCAB-Van)

was formed and started organizing monthly picket actions in front of the U.S. Consulate in downtown Vancouver. Vancouver is now joined by Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine in united and coordinated monthly actions against this criminal and unjust blockade and demanding that the U.S. return the U.S. occupied territory of Guantanamo to Cuba!

In Vancouver on August 17, 2018, Cuba solidarity activists and their supporters marched in front of the U.S. consulate holding picket signs high and chanting "Hey Trump, Lift the Blockade!" and "Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!". Between rounds of picketing, the protesters gathered together to hear from local speakers, as well as to hear a phone message of solidarity from Ottawa Cuba Connections, who also protested that day in front of the U.S. Embassy.

To wrap up the action, protesters gathered together for a photo in front of the U.S. Consulate doors, proudly holding a banner reading "End the Blockade of Cuba!" This photo was shared on Twitter and Facebook around the world to spread the word that supports for Cuba and protest against the blockade is alive and well here in Vancouver!

For more information and join FCAB or to participate in the next action against the U.S. blockade on Cuba, visit www.vancubavsblockade.org or follow on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

"NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL BLOCKADE IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA"



Scan the QR code to go to Cuba's Report on Resolution 72/4 of the United Nations General Assembly

REPEAL BILL C-51 SCRAP BILL C-59!

FIGHTING BACK AGAINST UNDEMOCRATIC LAWS

By Thomas Davies

The governments of the “Five Eyes” intelligence alliance met this month to discuss their mutual spy agency coordination and decided to issue a public communique. Unsurprisingly, the governments of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, England and the United States jointly called for more government access to digital information and threatened measures against tech companies which do not comply with their demands. Obviously, this is right in line with the Trudeau government’s attempt in its new national security Bill C-59 to extend cyber surveillance and state spy agency access to this same information.

The communique says, “Privacy laws must prevent arbitrary or unlawful interference, but privacy is not absolute. The increasing gap between the ability of law enforcement to lawfully access data and their ability to acquire and use the content of that data is a pressing international concern that requires urgent, sustained attention and informed discussion on the complexity of the issues and interests at stake.”

“Should governments continue to encounter impediments to lawful access to information necessary to aid the protection of the citizens of our countries, we may pursue technological,

enforcement, legislative or other measures to achieve lawful access solutions.”

This is the same tactic all of these governments used to create new “National Security” laws after September 11, 2001 – claiming that existing laws don’t allow them to protect populations properly. Then trying to dismantle as much of the privacy, human and civil rights frameworks in their countries as possible.

They have been successful in many areas, but have also faced significant resistance and forced to compromise. Stephen Harper famously saw his re-election chances implode after pushing through his Bill C-51 “Anti-Terrorism” Law, and now Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has been very careful in how he presents his C-59 “diet Pepsi” version of the same law and has tried to prolong the process in the hopes of allowing public anger and attention to die down.

This is certainly not what has happened in Vancouver, where the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 has continued a weekly action campaign for over 180 straight weeks, and shows no sign in stopping. The month of August saw the Working Group hold two banner drops and two picket and petition campaigns in Vancouver and Burnaby. Despite facing attempted police intimidation at the busy banner drop over the #1 Highway on August 20, the Working Group reaffirmed their right to freedom of assembly and completed the action. Despite returning to transit stations where there have already been multiple actions before, the Working Group continues to find genuine interest and anger when it comes to government attempts to limit democratic and human rights.

While C-59 has not been passed yet in the Senate of Canada to become law, we still have time to make our voices heard and to demand that Prime Minister Trudeau scrap his dangerous and unnecessary Bill C-59, and repeal the equally violative Bill C-51. The time is always right to defend human and democratic rights but now is particularly important. Our struggle and our opposition will be continued.

Repeal Bill C-51!

Scrap Bill C-59!

Our Security Lies in Defending the Rights of All!



“*By Any Means Necessary...*”



MALCOLM X SPEAKS

“In this year, 1965, I am certain that more – and worse- riots are going to erupt, in yet more cities, in spite of the conscience-salving Civil Rights Bill. The reason is that the cause of these riots – racist malignancy in the America – has been too long unattended.

I believe that it would be almost impossible to find anywhere in America a black man who has lived deeper down in the mud of human society than I have; or a black man who has been more ignorant than I have been; or a black man who has suffered more anguish in during life than I have. But it is only after the deepest darkness that the greatest joy can come; it is only after slavery and prison that the sweetest appreciation of freedom can come.

For the freedom of my 22 million black brothers and sisters here in America, I do believe that I fought the best that I knew how, and the best that I could, with the shortcomings that I have had.”

- *From Autobiography of Malcolm X*

continued from page 7

by NATO in their “Resolute Support Mission: Key Facts and Figures” July 2018 report. Also outlined above is the destruction of Libya by NATO forces, and their mild-sounding “no-fly zone” which was, in reality, a massive bombing operation and war against Libya.

In Iraq, from 2004 to today NATO has led various training missions, including the ones that Canada is a part of already mentioned earlier in this article.

While Russia is no longer the Soviet Union, this hasn't stopped NATO's saber-rattling against Russia. Already outlined above is NATO's “Enhanced Forward Presence” with currently 4,692 troops in four battalions on Russia's doorstep. NATO also conducts what it calls “air policing,” monitoring the airspace of countries bordering Russia, which Canada is currently part of in Romania with five CF-18 Hornets fighter jets.

With approximately 20,000 military personnel conducting NATO missions worldwide, NATO is the expanding and dangerous face of imperialism today. With NATO, rather than stretching their military resources too thin, imperialist countries can better conduct this new era of war and occupation through a division of labour – thereby more effectively suppressing the right to self-determination of oppressed nations worldwide. At the recent NATO summit in Brussels, it was very clear that U.S. President Trump considers NATO an

important tool for expanding imperialist wars and occupations when he pushed for NATO members to raise their military spending to 4% of their GDP. Already NATO members have a goal to spend 2% of their GDP on their military. In 2017, this brought total military spending by NATO members to \$900 billion, which is 52% of overall global military spending.

Bring the Troops Home Now! Canada Out of NATO!

If NATO is how imperialist countries are conducting this new era of war and occupation, it is NATO that antiwar activists and peace loving people must organize against. The

NATO Summit in Brussels was met with thousands of protesters, an anti-war counter-summit and anti-NATO actions around the world. For the antiwar movement today, coordinated and ongoing actions against NATO must be a central campaign, demanding the end of NATO. Here in Canada, we cannot let the government of Canada play their military exploits within NATO as contributions to the “international community.” As this article has outlined, Canada's military interventions are inflicting bloodshed, destruction, and denying the self-determination of oppressed nations and countries. Therefore antiwar activists must demand that Canada gets out of NATO and whether in a NATO, UN or any other military mission, Canada must bring their troops home.

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki



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If you would like to help with a donation, please make cheques payable to “Thomas Davies”.

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2.) INFO TABLING & PETITION 5:30PM
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